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STRANGE STORIES FROM HISTORY

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AMERICAN HISTORICAL FICTION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

These books tell thrilling stories of the personal life and heroic deeds of Americans in the great struggles of Colonial times, the Revolution, 1812, and 1861, which have welded together and built up the American nation. They are full of a close human interest and a dramatic quality which cannot be imparted in compact histories, although these tales are usually founded upon actual historical events. They enlist and hold the attention of readers, and they also clear the historical perspective and convey lessons in courage and patriotism. Mr. George Cary Eggleston's successful "Strange Stories from History" deals in part with heroes of other nations, but these books, while similar to that in many respects, tell of those whose gallant deeds gave us the America of to-day.

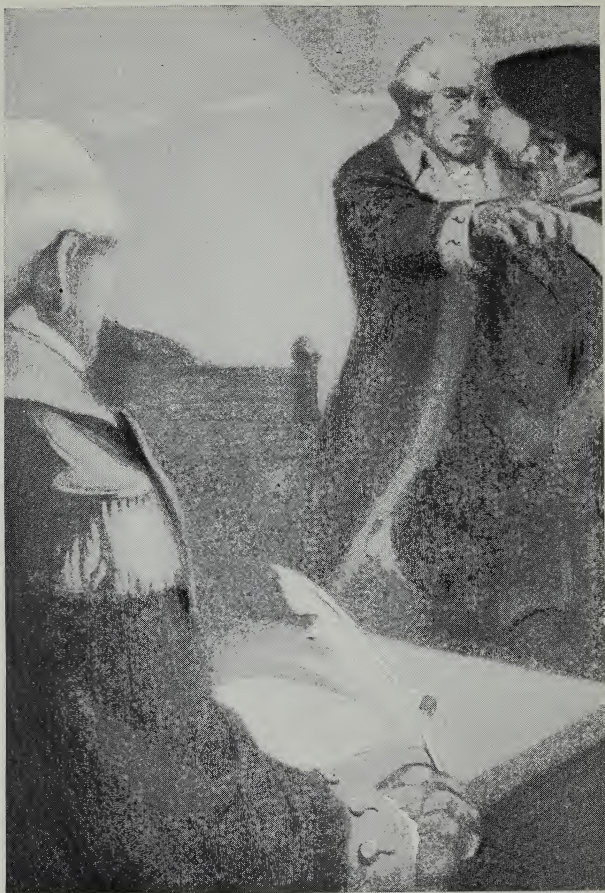
The following are the titles:

STRANGE STORIES OF COLONIAL DAYS. By FRANCIS STERNE PALMER, HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH, FRANCIS S. DRAKE, G. T. FERRIS, and others.

STRANGE STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION. By MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL, HOWARD PYLE, WINTHROP PACKARD, PERCIVAL RIDSDALE, and others.

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"RELEASE HIM, CAPTAIN," EXCLAIMED LAFAYETTE

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STRANGE STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION

BY
HOWARD PYLE, WINTHROP PACKARD
MOLLY ELLIOT SEAWELL
AND OTHERS

ILLUSTRATED



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MCMVII

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INTRODUCTION

 HIS book pictures a series of dramatic scenes in the Revolution, which follow in chronological order from events immediately after Lexington to adventures which preceded the fall of Yorktown and the surrender of Cornwallis. While these scenes are depicted in the form of fiction, they are based upon historical incidents, and the authors have endeavored to realize truthfully the actual character of the actors and the times. Since these stories deal in many cases with the more personal phases of Revolutionary life, which cannot be dwelt upon in the regular histories, it is believed that this book of historical adventure will be found to have a peculiarly intimate and illuminating interest. In other words: while the book offers the

INTRODUCTION

best of reading for him who reads for the sake of an exciting story, it also conveys a realizing sense of the actual life which Americans lived in our great struggle for liberty.

In the opening chapter one may find the true story of Paul Revere's ride, introducing Dawes, the almost forgotten hero who shared in that exploit, and this is followed by a picture of a boy's adventures when the news of Lexington roused the country-side, and by a dramatic tale of another event which followed Lexington, O'Brien's daring capture of the British ship *Margaretta* in the harbor of Machias. These were among the first conflicts of the long struggle—events which presently brought a British fleet and troops to New York, an invasion which has suggested the setting for the picturesque tale of "The Little Minute Man."

From New England and New York another year takes us to a girl's gallant patriotism at the time when the battle of Brandywine was fought, and there follow stirring chapters of strange adventures in the dark days of Valley Forge.

INTRODUCTION

From Pennsylvania the course of events takes us southward, where Tarleton was raiding the Carolinas and Marion's men, hard pressed but indomitable, were riding and fighting for liberty. Then follow the closing scenes when Washington's superb strategy, aided by the French fleet and the gallant Lafayette, was drawing the net about Cornwallis, and when the archtraitor, Benedict Arnold, after pillaging Richmond, and resting at Portsmouth, finally sailed away from Virginia, eluding all attempts at capture.

All this appears in the guise of fiction, but it is fiction which will help American boys and girls to a quicker consciousness of the meaning of the heroic deeds which won our independence.


STRANGE STORIES OF THE
REVOLUTION

STRANGE STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION

I

A RACE FOR LIBERTY¹

The True Story of Paul Revere's Ride

EAR midnight of April 18, 1775, a boat with muffled oars was rowed softly but swiftly across the Charles River from near Copps Hill, in the northern part of Boston peninsula, to the opposite shore, not far from the foot of Bunker (or Breeds) Hill in Charlestown—also a pen-

¹ It is generally believed that Paul Revere personally warned Concord, a notion derived from Longfellow's poem, "Paul Revere's Ride," wherein is some poetic license. The authorities for the present story are Revere and Dawes themselves. Revere's account of the ride is given in a communication from him to the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1798.

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insula. They passed so near to a British man-of-war lying at anchor in the stream that they could hear the rigging rattle as the great vessel rocked on the slow waves, and could hear the voices of the watch on the deck. But the boat reached the shore without being discovered; and a young man who had sat in the bow, silent and watchful, sprang out promptly. He was Paul Revere—familiar to most American readers as the man who warned the people on the road to Lexington of the approach of the British troops. His friends in Charlestown had seen two lights in the belfry of the Old North Church in Boston, which was the signal agreed upon to show that the British were crossing the river to Cambridge.

Deacon Larkin's black horse was ready for the messenger of warning, and in a few minutes Paul Revere was riding along the road on the southwest side of the Charlestown hills to the Neck. Here he took the left-hand road, leading through Cambridge; but the British had already landed. Only a short distance along this road grew some

A RACE FOR LIBERTY

great shady trees; and out from their shadow two armed redcoats spurred on their horses to meet Revere. Back on his course quickly turned the young patriot, closely followed by his foes. The swifter one, to shorten the distance, attempted to ride across a space from which clay had been dug out for brick-making. The water of the melting snows and ice had soaked the clay, making a deep mire. When the horse had floundered out of this, Revere had got well in advance up the northerly or right-hand road, which led through Medford—this route being longer by a mile.

Revere reached Lexington without further reverse, having roused and warned the sleepy families along the way. At a few minutes past twelve o'clock (the morning of the fateful April 19th) Revere rode along between the meeting-house and Buckman's tavern, northward past the Green, to the house of Rev. Jonas Clark, where the patriots Hancock and Adams were staying. Here, for half an hour, rider and horse took a rest. Then arrived another messenger, William Dawes, who had

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come all the way by land, through West Roxbury and Brookline. The two started off together to warn the people at Concord, six miles farther on.

They had gone but a little distance when another horseman came galloping up behind them. He proved to be young Dr. Prescott, of Concord, who had been spending a social evening with some friends in Lexington. He was truly, as Revere described him, "A high Son of Liberty"; and he lent his assistance in awaking the residents along the road and giving the alarm.

About half-way between two villages, at a shady turn of the road, Revere, who was in advance of the others, was brought to a stand by a line of mounted redcoats extending across the way. He took the avenue of escape—for he had not time to turn his horse entirely about—and rode through an open gateway just by him, into a field. After him went two or more of the redcoats.

Next Dawes and Prescott came up, were met by others of the British, and turned into the field, pursued by some of the enemy.

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Revere had ridden towards the woods back of the field, with the intention of leaving his horse and escaping through the woods and fields on foot to Concord; but out from the shade of the trees there rushed on him two other mounted redcoats, who made him a prisoner.

Nearly eight hundred British regulars were at this moment on the march, and Concord, with its valuable military supplies, slept on, unconscious that before the sun had reached meridian their village was to swarm with redcoats bent on destruction.

Dr. Prescott, perceiving several red-coated horsemen near the woods, took his course at a gallop through the middle of the field. He knew both his horse and this locality well, and led his pursuers a short but lively chase. Having distanced them a little, he wheeled his horse towards the road, and spurred him up to the wall, over which he made a clear leap to the highway.

The discomfited redcoats turned back without attempting to imitate the break-neck feat.

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While the British were securing Revere and chasing Dr. Prescott, Dawes had turned about and ridden back the way they had come; but he too was pursued by a pair of mounted soldiers. His horse was quite fagged with his long journey, and the fresh horses of his pursuers were almost up with him in the first quarter-mile. Near the road at this point stood a farm-house, all dark and silent, and Dawes rode into its shadow and close up to the porch at full speed.

As his horse stopped short Dawes slapped his hand down on his leather breeches with a resounding thwack, and called out as if to persons inside:

“Halloo, boys! I’ve got two of ’em.”

The redcoats were struck with the idea that a lot of armed Yankees would the next instant rush out upon them, and they whirled their horses about and galloped away at their best speed.

As soon as they were out of sight Dawes resumed his course back towards Lexington. The next morning the family found a big silver watch on the ground. Dawes had

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stopped so suddenly that it had been flung from his pocket. He had felt the movement, but in the excitement of the moment gave it no thought; his property was restored to him later.

As soon as possible, pursuit of Dr. Prescott was made along the road, but it was a blank failure. The ten or twelve redcoats soon started back towards Lexington with their solitary prisoner, Paul Revere. They were abusive at first, but he was so fearless, and told them such alarming stories of the rallying of the minute-men all along the route, that they were much frightened; and when they came near Lexington and heard the bells ringing and the drums beating, they gave Revere no attention at all, and he slipped away from them without their making any attempt to restrain him, so anxious were they now to make their own escape.

II

A CAPTAIN OF THREE

In the Days before Bunker Hill

MONG all the Blackmans whom the echoes of the Concord fight called from the good old town of Stoughton to the ranks of the patriot army you shall not find the name of Enoch, yet Enoch played his part in one of the early encounters, and if it was "more by hit than any good wit," as the old folks said, still it served its purpose.

Too lame to march, with an arm too badly twisted to handle a gun, Enoch had yet within his crippled body the soul of a Leonidas. The talk of war and drilling of minute-men were matters of great interest to Enoch, and he was as familiar with the drill and evolutions as the men themselves.

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In his herding through the bright spring days, when the lowland pastures were flushed with budding shrubs and the brook meadows tender with grasses, he managed the herd with the words of the drill-master, and if the placid cattle did not understand "forward march," "right wheel," "halt," and "charge bayonets," it was not Enoch's fault. His voice was as big as his soul, too, and often you would hear its great full tones ring from the depths of the wood, going conscientiously through the manual of arms while the cattle browsed on the hill-side.

Henry Perley was a stout young fellow, quiet, apprenticed to a tailor, and Enoch's greatest friend. "Ah, Henry," Enoch would say, "if I had only your chance! You are strong. You can march and fight, and some day you will go into the war and come back a hero, a general, and tell me all about it."

Then Henry would pat the little fellow on the shoulder, saying: "More like I would not come back at all. Besides, how is my master to get along without me? There is the suit of small-clothes to finish for Major

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Crane, and the coat for Squire Atherton. Who is to do the work if we all go a-soldiering?"

Yet on the day when the story of the Lexington daybreak echoed from lip to lip Henry laid down his needle and, with the full consent of his master, enlisted in the patriot forces. This was not difficult. All day bands of farmers and woodsmen had trooped down the road with musket on shoulder, headed for the lines that were so soon to draw a cordon about Boston. Some of these rough countrymen were to lay down their lives in the redoubt at Bunker Hill; others to live to fight out the Revolution and to see a ripe old age on peaceful farms. Of these latter was Henry; but that day he did not think or care about these alternatives. There was a decision in his manner and a conscious lift of the head as he left the shop that afternoon that made his master, tailor Armstrong, wonder. Such is the sudden birth of purpose in a strong soul.

Stepping up to an officer who had halted his troop for rest a moment in front of the

A CAPTAIN OF THREE

May Tavern, he said, "If you will give me a gun I will go with you."

A few moments afterwards Henry Perley had signed the roll of the company, and was a private in what was to be the besieging army. He was greatly surprised at the aged and useless weapon that they brought him.

"Why, this," he said—"I can't fight with this. It's nothing but an Indian gun!"

"It isn't very good," the other admitted; "but it is the only one we have. Guns are scarce to-day. It will do to drill with, and you can get a better by-and-by."

The thought of going into battle with only the useless Indian gun was not a pleasant one, and after a moment's thought Henry said, "I think I can get a gun—a good one too—if I can have an hour's time."

The officer replied, with decision: "We cannot wait. This company must get to the front as soon as possible, but if you wish you may follow us. We shall reach the lines at Dorchester to-night. Ask for Captain Endicott's company."

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The order "Forward march!" was given, and the little band of patriots swung along the dusty road, while the new recruit started across the fields to the house of Enoch Blackman. Enoch had a good gun, and Enoch could not use it. He would rejoice to let Henry have this, and then he would be as well equipped as the others.

At the door of the Blackman farm-house he was met by Mrs. Blackman with a tear in her motherly eye.

"Enoch is herding in the low pasture near the brook meadow," she said. "The gun is gone. My man took it this morning, and is off with the first company. You are going too? God bless you, my boy! I wish Enoch— But, there! We must have some man body about the place."

Henry wished Enoch too, but it was out of the question. So bidding her remember him to the lad, he turned back, crossing towards the Dorchester road, with his Indian gun over his shoulder. It was a pretty poor sort of a gun; the barrel was dented, and the lock was broken. Still, it looked like a gun,

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and would do to drill with, as the Captain had said. After a time he heard laughter, and a boy's voice singing a rollicking little ditty:

“Oh, father 'n' I went down to camp
Along of Captain Toodin',
And there we saw the boys and men
As thick as hasty-puddin'.”

Two boys stepped out of the wood on to the path.

“Hi, Ben! Hi, Eben!” shouted Henry.
“Where are you going with those guns?”

The song ceased, and the one addressed as Eben hailed him, familiarly: “Hullo, Hen!” he said. “Where are you going yourself?”

“For a soldier,” replied Henry, gravely. “I joined Captain Endicott's company two hours ago. They let me stay behind to see if I could get a better gun. Now I'm going to hurry and catch up.”

“For a soldier!” echoed the volatile Eben. “Why, so are we. We were going over to join the next lot of minute-men that came along, but we'd a good sight rather go with you. Take us along, will you?”

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Henry gladly assented. He was only too glad to have companions, particularly so jolly a one as Eben Dickerman.

"You are the enlisted man," Eben went on; "and you shall be Captain. I am First Lieutenant, if you please, and, Bussey—well Bussey will have to be a high private. We've got to have some privates in this company, and Bussey is the man.

"Mind the music and the step,"

trolled Eben, gayly. "Hurrah for Captain Perley! Also Lieutenant Dickerman!" and the light-hearted lad cut a caper that was like an Indian war-dance.

Henry caught the spirit of his friend. "Company, attention!" he ordered. "Forward, march!" The three fell into step together and headed for the Dorchester road. It was much like playing soldier now, but how would they carry themselves in the face of an enemy? That very night they were to see.

There had been powder-mills at Stoughton for twenty-five years, and at the outbreak

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of the Revolution they were started up in earnest, supplying large quantities of powder to the Colonists during the war. It was these powder-mills that Major Dodsley had in mind in his little raid into the Dorchester back-woods that day.

Stationed at an outpost on the Neck, active, audacious, and a good soldier, he had heard of the Stoughton powder, and had orders to reconnoitre, possibly destroy, these mills. He had started before dawn that April 19th, marched with a squad of six men to the neighborhood of Blue Hill, and hidden in the woods, waiting for night, to steal on to Stoughton. He reasoned that a few men, concealed by darkness, could reconnoitre the mills, and return to town unmarked. It was a well-laid plan.

Darkness caught our three soldiers at the foot of Blue Hill, and they sat under the trees by the road to rest. They did not talk much. Suddenly there were footsteps in the road, and Ben Bussey laid a strong hand on Henry Perley's arm. Henry looked, and Eben Dickerman sprang to his feet with a half-

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suppressed cry. Quite visible in the twilight stood a British officer peering into the darkness to see whence came the smothered exclamation. At his side was a private, and both were in the uniform of the British army. It was Major Dodsley. He had left his five men to follow at a distance, while he and his companion went forward to reconnoitre. The three boys sat breathless.

"Did you hear that, Jan?" asked the Major.

"Ay," replied the Yorkshireman. "Happen it were nowt but a beast i' the thicket."

The Major listened, "Yes," he said, "it must have been a beast of some sort. Come on." They passed on up the road.

"Happen I'm a beast," murmured Eben, softly, "and happen I'm nowt, but—" He levelled his gun at the two figures. But Henry Perley laid a restraining hand on his arm. "For shame!" he said. "Would you shoot a man behind his back? Wait a bit and we'll capture them."

"I'm not particular about his back," said Eben. "I'll shoot him in front if he'll turn round." But he lowered his gun.

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Henry whispered a plan to them hurriedly. It met their approval. "Good for Captain Perley," said the volatile Eben, and, with Bussey following, slipped into the darkness of the wood. Keeping well in the shadow of the trees, Henry noiselessly followed the two soldiers. What a change for him—that morning a quiet tailor's apprentice, that night following, Indian fashion with his Indian gun, the footsteps of two British soldiers, intent on their capture! His heart beat fast, but it was with no lack of courage. Would his companions reach the prescribed spot in time? Would he have courage to carry out his part of the plan? He hoped so. He slipped nearer and nearer to the two soldiers.

Major Dodsley heard a stealthy footfall behind, and looked quickly around to see the figure of a man in the moonlighted road behind him, and hear a sharp command.

"Halt!" it said.

The two soldiers whirled, the Yorkshireman swinging a little behind his commander. The Indian gun was levelled full at the two,

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and looked as dangerous as might be in the moonlight.

"Who, in Heaven's name, are ye?" roared the Major. "Banditti?" His hand went towards his pistol as he spoke, and the Yorkshireman's gun was swinging towards Henry.

"Hands off!" cried Henry. "If you touch your weapons I'll shoot."

The Major gave a snort of rage, but his hand hesitated in air.

The words were bold and decisive, yet Henry's heart was beginning to quake within him. He had heard no sound of Ben and Eben, and their immediate presence was vitally necessary. Had their hearts failed them? If so—

The Yorkshire soldier's right hand, concealed by the form of the Major, stole softly to his master's belt, drew a pistol therefrom, and levelled it carefully over the Major's shoulder. Henry Perley could not see this, but he did see the two forms that stole silently from the road-side behind the two soldiers. The Yorkshireman had a good aim now, and his finger was gently pressing the



THE YORKSHIREMAN HAD A GOOD AIM

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trigger (those old pistols pull hard), when a sweeping stroke from the barrel of a musket sent the weapon flying and nearly broke his arm. He turned, with a cry of pain, to see Eben Dickerman fairly dancing about in the road, his musket aimed full at the Yorkshireman.

"Surrender, you nowt lobster!" cried Eben. "Surrender, or I'll shoot you full of holes!"

At the other side of the pair stood Ben Bussey, with musket levelled, and Major Dodsley, though a brave soldier, saw that the odds were too strong for them. If his men—but there was no sign of them as yet. "We are your prisoners," he said, sulkily.

"Captain" Perley's heart beat with pride. He had been an enlisted soldier about six hours and he had captured a British officer. The three stood with their backs towards Boston—Bussey and Dickerman covering the two soldiers with their guns, while Henry proceeded to disarm them. The Yorkshireman gazed at the Indian gun with surprise.

"Us be vools, Major," he growled. "Us be grand vools. Her can none shoot yon gun."

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The Major was fumbling at the fastenings of his sword, but his eyes gazed furtively down the road. There was a gleam of expectancy in his eyes, and he was delaying the surrender of his weapons as long as possible.

"Your sword, sir," said Henry Perley, quietly, but firmly.

He felt that he was master of the situation. The next moment there was a clicking of musket-locks from the road behind, and a cool command was given.

"Carry arms! Ready, aim!" it said.

The three young patriots turned in surprise, and great was their dismay at what they saw. In the road stood a file of soldiers, as correct in alignment as if on dress parade. Their elbows touched, and their five muskets were levelled at the little group. Eben Dickerman's musket butt struck the ground with a thud, and he stared in ludicrous fear at the muzzles of the guns.

"Here, here," he gasped, "don't point those things at me."

The next moment the hands of the sturdy Yorkshireman were at Eben's throat, and he

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was forced to the ground, where his enemy sat on him gleefully.

"Wilt shoot me full of holes, wilt tha?" he growled. "Happen thou'lt have holes in thyself ere long."

Eben did not say anything. He couldn't.

The sword which Major Dodsley had fumbled so long leaped from its scabbard at the first sound from the squad of men, and was now pointed at Henry Perley's breast. "Will you surrender," he asked, grimly, "or—" There was no need to explain the alternative. Henry Perley's hands fell at his side. "I surrender," he said, as sulkily as had his captive of a few moments before. Then the Major spoke sharply to his men.

"Get the other one!" he cried. "Get the other one!" But it was too late; Ben Bussey had slipped like a shadow into the darkness of the wood.

Such is the effect of discipline. The five soldiers had stood motionless, with muskets at shoulder, waiting the word of command.

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"You confounded idiots!" scolded the Major. "He'll have the country up in arms in five minutes."

Realizing that the scouting expedition was a failure now, the order to return to Boston was given, and Henry and Eben, deprived even of the Indian gun, and guarded on either side by British soldiers, marched sadly towards the city.

But not far. A few rods below this place the lower road from the brook meadow enters the Boston road, and just as they reached this there was a sound as of marching men in the darkness. The little band heard it and stopped.

The hurrying feet drew rapidly nearer, and there was a sound of galloping.

"A troop of 'orse," muttered the Yorkshireman. Then there came an order in a stentorian voice. "Column left, march!" it roared. "Forward, double quick! Charge bayonets!"

The hurrying feet broke into a run, and a hurly of rapidly approaching figures was at the mouth of the lane. Just then there was

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a sharp command from the wood behind them. "Carry arms!" it said. "Ready, aim!"

Discipline ended here. There was a wild cry of "Ambushed!" a fusillade of shots that all went wild, and five soldiers scattered into the darkness just as a herd of cattle swept from the brook meadow lane into the road. On their flank hung Enoch Dickerman, wild with excitement, and shouting the whole manual of arms, conscious that he was in some sort of an encounter, but not knowing at all what. Nor was his astonishment lessened to find in the road Henry Perley and Ben Bussey holding firmly a struggling British officer, while in the dust by the way lay a sturdy Yorkshireman, with Eben Dickerman sitting on his chest.

"Happen thou'lt choke me, wilt tha?" Eben was saying. "Happen you'll get choked yourself."

The Yorkshireman wasn't saying anything. He couldn't.

"Surround 'em!" yelled Enoch, fairly dancing up and down. "Give it to 'em!"

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Go it, Henry! I told you you'd be a great soldier some day."

Major Dodsley and the Yorkshireman surrendered at discretion, and captors and captives thus again changed places. They saw nothing more of the other soldiers, who must later have reached the city safely. Enoch explained that the cattle had strayed far beyond the brook meadow, and he had been long delayed in getting them headed for home. The orders from the wood had been from Ben Bussey, who had followed the squad, hoping to find a way to rescue his comrades. He had recognized Enoch's voice at once, and with ready wit had taken his cue from him.

The parting between Enoch and Henry was an affectionate one, and Enoch drove his herd homeward through the moonlight, eager to bear news of the adventure, while the three escorted their captive safely into the patriot lines, where they arrived at a late hour.

"Halt! Who goes there?" was the challenge of the sentry.


A CAPTAIN OF THREE

"Captain Perley and his company, with a section of the British army as prisoners," replied Eben Dickerman, gayly. "How's that for our first day's work?"

III

A BOY OF 1775

The Story of the Capture of the "Margaretta"

 CAN you not see the boy of 1775 now—his sturdy legs encased in stout black stockings, german-silver buckles to his knee-breeches, his hair plaited and tied with a smart black ribbon, and all this magnificence topped by three real silver buttons with which his hat is rakishly cocked? But the boy himself is better worth looking at than all his finery—so thought Captain Moore, of his Majesty's ship *Margaretta*, lying at anchor in the harbor of Machias. Jack Leverett was the boy's name—a handsome stripling of sixteen, with a quiet manner but a fearless eye.

The two were sitting opposite each other at the cabin table, and through the open

port they could see the village and the harbor, bathed in the bright white light of a day in May. The Captain was conscious that this young guest was decidedly in a hurry to leave. A whole hour had they sat at the dinner-table, Captain Moore, with the utmost art, trying to find out Jack's errand to Machias—for those were the stirring days when every American had to take his stand for or against King George—and Captain Moore particularly desired to know how Squire Leverett, Jack's father, stood towards the King. But Jack, with native mother-wit, had managed to baffle the Captain. He had readily admitted that he was the bearer of a letter from his father to Jerry O'Brien, master of Squire Leverett's sloop *Priscilla*, in regard to heaving down the sloop. But the Captain, with a seaman's eye, had noted that the *Priscilla* was in perfect order and did not need to be hove down, and he more than suspected that Jack was the bearer of other and more important news. Through the cabin windows they could see the sloop, a beautiful craft, being warped

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into her dock, while across the blue water was wafted sweetly the voices of the men, led by the shanty man,¹ singing the old shanty song:

“Haul the bowline, our jolly ship’s a-rolling,
Haul the bowline, the bowline *haul!*
Haul the bowline, our jolly mate’s a-growling,
Haul the bowline, the bowline *haul!*”

As soon as Jack decently could, he started to rise from the table. Captain Moore had observed that the glass of wine at Jack’s plate remained untasted, and it suggested a means of finding out whether the Leveretts meant to go with the King or not.

“Do not go,” he said, “until you have joined me in drinking the health of his Majesty King George.”

Jack had no notion whatever of drinking the King’s health, but he was at his wit’s end how to avoid it. Just then, though, the Captain turned to speak to his orderly,

¹“Shanty man”.—from “Chantez”—a man who could lead the singing while the men worked. A good shanty man was considered to be a valuable acquisition to a vessel.

and Jack took the opportunity of gulping down his wine with more haste than elegance. Captain Moore, seeing it, was surprised and disgusted at the boy's apparent greediness for wine, but raising his glass, said, "To the King."

"Excuse me, sir," answered Jack, coolly, "but my father never allows me to drink but one glass of wine, and that I have already had."

"Then I will drink the toast alone," said Captain Moore, with a stern look at the boy. "Here is to his Majesty King George. Health and long life to him! God save the King!"

As Captain Moore uttered this sentiment Jack rose and promptly put on his hat. The Captain was quite sure that the boy's action, like his gulping down the wine, meant a distaste for the King, and not a want of breeding. But he thought it best not to notice the incident, and said, civilly, to his young guest:

"Present my compliments to your honored father, and tell him that his Majesty's officers

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have the kindest feelings towards these misguided people; and while if attacked we will certainly defend ourselves, we have strict orders to avoid a conflict if possible, and not to fire until fired upon."

"I will remember your message, sir," was Jack's answer; and the Captain, having no further excuse for detaining his young guest, allowed him to depart.

He was soon alongside of the *Priscilla*, and there, standing at the gangway, was the sloop's master, Jerry O'Brien. Jerry, by an accident of fate, had inherited an Irish name, but he was as arrant a Yankee as ever stepped. He was a handsome fellow withal, and in his natty blue suit much more resembled the captain of an armed cruiser than the master of a smart merchant vessel. The *Priscilla*, too, was a wonderful contrast to the slovenly merchantmen around her. She was as clean as hands could make her, and her beautiful lines were brought out by the shining coat of black paint upon her hull. Her men were smart and seaman-like. Jerry O'Brien was the most exacting ship-

master on that coast, but he never had any trouble in shipping men, for, while making them do their work with the quickness and steadiness of man - o' - war's men, he used neither blows nor curses. A natural leader of men, he made himself respected first, and after that it is always easy to command obedience.

As soon as Jack Leverett came over the side Jerry took him to the cabin. Jack produced a letter, and by the heat from a ship's lantern some writing in lemon-juice was deciphered. It contained a full account of the affairs at Lexington and Concord, of which only vague rumors had reached Machias. At every sentence descriptive of American valor Jerry would give a half-suppressed whoop, and at the end he could not forbear letting out a huzza that made the little cabin ring.

"Suppose," said Jack, who had hard work to keep from hurrahing wildly, "instead of making a noise, we should invent a scheme to capture the *Margaretta*. If the farmers around Boston could, with hay-forks and

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blunderbusses, beat off the British regulars, the sailors and fishermen about here ought to be able to get alongside the *Margaretta* and take her."

Jerry's mouth was large, and it came open like a rat-trap at this bold proposition. After a pause he spoke. "Boy," said he, "the enterprise shall be tried; and if we succeed, you shall be prize-master of the *Margaretta*."

Jack's heart leaped at these words. He was an admirable sailor, like most of the hardy youngsters on the coast, and had more than once taken the *Priscilla* on short trips. But his mother and the Squire meant him to be something else than a merchant captain, and kept him under a tutor when he would much rather have been sailing blue water. For hours Jack and Jerry sat in the cabin talking over their scheme. Jerry knew that the people of Machias were heart and soul with the cause of freedom, and could be depended upon in any desperate adventure. The *Margaretta* carried four brass guns and a number of swivels; but, as Jerry shrewdly said, if once the *Priscilla*

could grapple with her, it would be a battle of men and musketry, not of guns. At nightfall Jack and Jerry went ashore. A great vivid moon hung in the sky, and they could see the *Margaretta* almost as well as in daylight. She was a handsome vessel, schooner rigged, and in a state of preparation that showed Captain Moore did not mean to be caught napping. All her boats were hoisted in, her anchors had springs on them, and her sails were merely clewed up, instead of being furled.

"There you are, my beauty," said Jerry. "It's a shame, so it is, that King George's ensign should fly from your peak. You deserve an American flag, and we'll try and give it you."

All that night they spent going from house to house of the men who had the patriotism to enlist with them, and by daylight they had the promise of twenty-five resolute men who, at a signal of three cheers given from the *Priscilla*, would at once board her and put themselves under Jerry O'Brien's command.

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All this commotion on shore had not escaped Captain Moore's lookouts during the night, and although the Captain would much have preferred staying and fighting it out, his orders compelled him to cut and run if signs of an outbreak were visible. The British government then earnestly wished to conciliate the Colonists, and by no means to come to blows.

The next morning was Sunday, and as beautifully clear and bright as the day before. In order to avoid the appearance of fear, Captain Moore determined, with his officers, to go to church as usual. As the Captain's gig landed the officers, Jerry O'Brien and Jack Leverett, with the six men who composed the *Priscilla's* crew, were all on deck, keeping a sharp eye on the *Margaretta* and her boat.

"What say you, men," suddenly asked Jerry, "to bagging those officers in church?"

"We say yes," answered every man at once. In a few minutes, with Jerry and Jack in the lead, and all well armed, they took the road towards the church. As they

neared it they heard the faint sweet echo of a hymn that floated out on the spring air—the only sound that broke the heavenly stillness.

Jerry silently posted his men at the entrance, and then opening the door softly, raised his horse-pistol and levelled it straight at Captain Moore, who sat in the last pew.

The British Captain happened to turn his head at that instant. The congregation was too absorbed in the singing to notice what was going on. Jerry nodded at the Captain, as much as to say, "You are my prisoner." The Captain coolly shook his head, as if to answer, "Not quite, my fine fellow," and the next moment he made a sudden dash for the open window, followed by all of his officers, and before Jerry could realize that the birds had flown, they had run half way to the shore. In vain Jerry and Jack and their followers pursued. The officers had too long a lead, and by the time the Americans reached the shore the Captain's gig was being pulled rapidly to the ship. As soon as the boat reached it the anchors

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were picked up, every sail that would draw was shaken out, and the cruiser made for the offing. As soon as she was well under way she sent a shot of defiance screaming over the town, and was answered by three thundering American cheers from the *Priscilla*. As if by magic the sloop's deck was alive with armed men, and with a quickness equal to the cruiser's, her main-sail was up, and she was winging her way in pursuit of her enemy.

Well had the *Priscilla* been called the fastest sloop in all that region. The wind was dead ahead, and both vessels had to get out of the river on "a long leg and a short one." The *Margaretta* was handled in a seaman-like manner, but on every tack the *Priscilla* gained, and showed that she was a better sailer both on and off the wind. In an hour they were within hailing distance, and the men on the *Margaretta* were called to quarters by the tap of the drum. Her guns were run out, their tompions withdrawn, and the cruiser showed herself to be an ugly customer to tackle. But this

did not intimidate the Americans, who were closing on her fast.

A hail came from the *Margaretta*, "What are you following us for?"

"To learn how to tack ship!" responded Jerry O'Brien, who had taken the wheel himself. This reply caused a roar of laughter from the Americans, as the *Priscilla* could come about in half the time of the *Margaretta*.

"Keep off or I'll fire!" was the next hail.

"Fire away, gentlemen," bawled Jerry, "and light your matches with your orders not to fire first!"

At this the gallant British tars groaned, loudly, and Captain Moore, drawing his sword and shaking it at the rapidly advancing sloop, shouted:

"Orders or no orders, I will fire one round if I lose my commission for it. Blow your matches, boys!"

The guns were already manned, and at the word there was a flash of light, a puff of smoke, and a round shot came hissing and shrieking across the water and struck the

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Priscilla's main-mast fairly in the middle, splintering it. The sloop staggered under the blow, and in a minute or two the mast went by the board with a crash.

A great cheer broke from the *Margaretta's* men at that.

"Never mind," cried Jerry. "This is not the first mast that was ever carried away, and we have spare spars and carpenters too. Wait for us in Holmes Bay, and we will fight it out yard-arm to yard-arm before sundown."

The *Margaretta*, with her men cheering and jeering, sailed away towards the open sea. The *Priscilla* being the best-found sloop in New England, in a little while the stump of the mast was cleared away, a lighter spar, but still good enough, was fitted, and she made sail on it.

As she neared the ocean the wind freshened every moment, and although the sun shone brilliantly, a heavy sea was kicked up. Soon they sighted the *Margaretta*, with her topsail backed, and gallantly waiting for her enemy.

In all this time Jack Leverett showed a steadiness and coolness beyond his years. Once Jerry O'Brien said to him:

"Youngster, if you flinch, depend upon it your father shall know it."

"All right," answered Jack; "and if I don't flinch I want my mother to know it."

The two vessels now neared each other on opposite tacks. Captain Moore manœuvred to get into a raking position before delivering his fire, but the *Priscilla*, by skilful yawing and by the roughness of the sea, proved to be as difficult to hit as if she had been a cork bobbing up and down. In vain they played their two starboard guns and all their swivels on her; their shot rarely struck, and when it struck, did small damage.

Not so with the Americans. Without a single cannon, they poured forth a musketry fire at close quarters that did fearful work and made hot the *Margaretta's* decks. The brave British sailors stood manfully to their guns, but the Americans were gradually edging up, and their fire grew more deadly every moment. The *Margaretta* tried to

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sheer off, but the *Priscilla*, closing up, got her jib-boom entangled in her adversary's main-rigging, and a dozen Americans sprang forward to make the two ships fast.

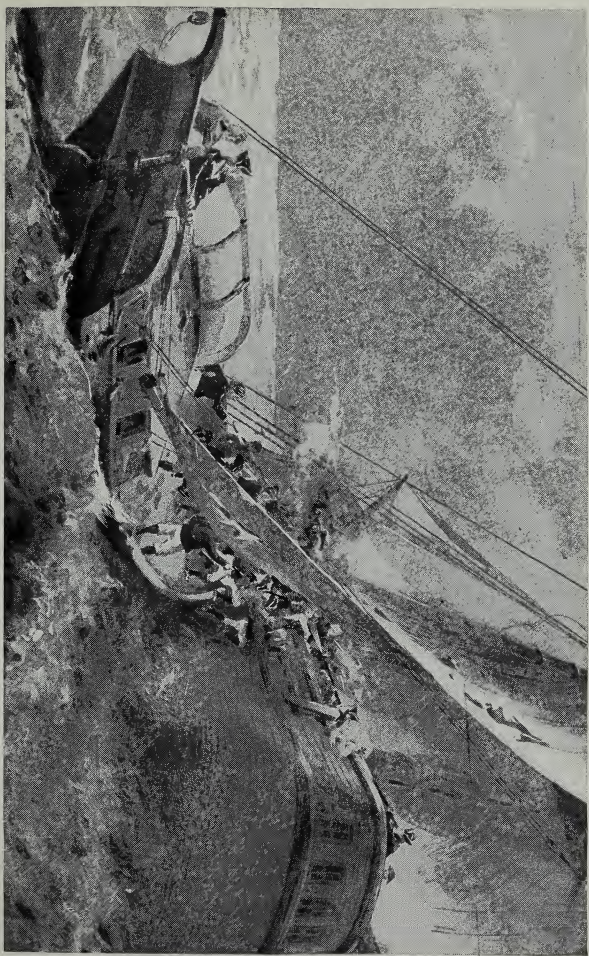
As the vessels came grinding together, Jerry O'Brien, leaping on the taffrail, shouted, "I will be the first man to board—and follow me!"

But Jerry was mistaken. He was suddenly seized by the coat-tails, jerked backward, and fell sprawling upon the deck, and the next instant Jack Leverett sprang over him, and was first upon the *Margaretta's* deck.

"Drat the boy!" was Jerry's involuntary exclamation as he scrambled to his feet.

The Americans poured over the side, and met with a warm reception. Captain Moore, surrounded by his officers, retreated to the fo'c'sle, fighting every step of the way. At last Jerry O'Brien came face to face with him. The Captain defended himself with his sword, but it was knocked out of his hand by Jerry with a pistol butt. They clinched and fell to the deck fighting. The

THE AMERICANS Poured OVER THE SIDE



struggle was sharp but short, and in fifteen minutes from the time the Americans had lashed the ships together, the Captain was overpowered, nearly every officer had been cut down, and the cruiser was in the hands of the Americans. There had been much cheering on the *Priscilla* that day, but when the British ensign was hauled down, and Jerry, in default of a national flag, hoisted his own jacket at the mast-head, there were three cheers given that could almost be heard at Machias.

The prisoners were quickly transferred to the *Priscilla*, and as Jerry O'Brien required all of his best men on board, he could only spare a few landsmen for a prize-crew on the *Margaretta*.

"But I will give her a prize-master who, although not very old, can sail a schooner or any other craft—John Leverett, there," said Jerry. "And he will take her in, you may be sure."

Oh, how Jack's heart beat with delight at these words!

Soon they were heading up the river, and

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when, under a fair wind, they made a quick run to Machias, the May moon made the heavens glorious. Jack Leverett thought the happiest moment of his life had come when they cast anchor amid the thunder of cheers from the people assembled along the shores.

But there was a happier moment yet in store for him. A week afterwards Jack and Jerry O'Brien entered Squire Leverett's study, where sat the Squire and Madam Leverett. The mother uttered a cry of joy and clasped her boy in her arms. Then Jerry O'Brien, taking him by the hand, led him to the Squire.

"Sir," he said, "here is your brave boy. You have reason to be proud of him. I have been promised two things when the navy of the Colonies is formed. One is a Captain's commission for myself, and the other is a midshipman's commission for this lad. He is born for the sea, and to make a landsman of him would be like putting a mackerel in a barn-yard to scratch for his living."


A BOY OF 1775

The Squire, too moved to speak, silently took one of Jack's hands in both of his, and Madam Leverett, falling on her boy's neck, cried, "How happy am I to have such a boy to give to my country!"

IV

THE LITTLE MINUTE-MAN

When the British Took New York in 1776.

LL during the winter Brinton had been saying what he would do if the redcoats came, and grieving because his age, which was eight, prevented him from going with his father to fight under General Washington.

Every night, when his mother tucked him in his bed and kissed him good-night, he told her not to be afraid, that he had promised his father to protect her, and he proposed to do it.

His plan of action, in the event of the sudden appearance of the enemy, varied somewhat from day to day, but in general outline it consisted of a bold show of force at the front gate and a flank attack by Towser, the dog.

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Should these tactics fail to discourage the British, he intended to retire behind a stone fort he had built on the lawn, between the two tall elms, and to fire stones at the invaders until they fell back in confusion, while his mother would look on and encourage him from the front porch.

When the redcoats unexpectedly appeared in the distance, one afternoon in May, what Brinton really did was to run helter-skelter down the road, up the broad path to the house, through the front hall into the library, close the door, and then peep out of the window to watch them go by.

When he first caught sight of the soldiers Brinton was sure that there was at least a regiment of them, but when they were opposite the front gate all that he could see were a corporal and three privates. Instead of keeping on their way, however, they turned up the path towards the house, and then it seemed to Brinton that they were the most gigantic human beings that he had ever seen.

His mother was away for the day, and had

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taken Towser with her. This, together with the fact that the enemy were now between him and his fort, entirely spoiled Brinton's plan of campaign, and he decided to seek at once some more secluded spot, and there to devise something to meet the changed conditions. But when he started to run out of the room, he found that in his hurry he had left the front-door open, so that any one in the hall would be in plain sight of the soldiers, who were now very near.

Unfortunately, there was no other door by which Brinton could leave the room. What was worse, there was no closet in which he could hide. The soldiers were now so close at hand that he could hear their voices, and a glance through the window showed him that two of them were going around to the back of the house, as if to cut off any possible escape in that direction.

And his mother would not be back until six o'clock. Instinctively his eyes sought the face of the tall timepiece in the corner. It was just three; and he could hear the soldiers' steps on the front porch!



THE MINUTE-MAN TAKES HIS POSITION

THE LITTLE MINUTE-MAN

The clock!

Surely there was room within its generous case for a very small boy.

In less time than it takes to write it Brinton was inside, and had turned the button with which the door was fastened. As he pressed himself close against the door, so that there should be room for the pendulum to swing behind him, he heard the corporal enter the room. He knew it must be the corporal, because he ordered the other man to go up-stairs and look around there, while he searched the room on the other side of the hall.

Brinton could hear the footsteps of the men as they walked about the house, and their voices as they talked to each other. Then all was quiet for a long while. He was just on the point of peeping out, when all four men entered the room.

"Well," said a voice that he recognized as the corporal's, "it is plain there is no one at 'ome. Me own himpression is that the bird's flown. 'E's probably started back for camp, and the wife and the kid with 'im.

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I don't believe in payink no hattention to w'at them Tories says, nohow, goink back on their own neighbors—and kin, too, like as not. It's just to curry favor with the hofficers, it's me own hopinion. 'Ow did 'e know the Major was comink 'ome to-day, anyhow?"

Nobody answered him. Perhaps he didn't expect any one to.

The Major! Brinton's own father! He was coming home! This, then was the surprise that his mother had said she would bring him when she went off with Towser in the morning to go to Colonel Shepard's. And now those redcoats were going to sit there and wait until he came, and then—Brinton did not know what would happen, whether he would be shot on the spot, or merely put in prison for the rest of his life.

Oh, if he could only get out and run to meet his father and warn him! But the men seemed to give no signs of leaving the room.

"Perhaps he haven't come at all yet," suggested one of the privates.

THE LITTLE MINUTE-MAN

"Perhaps 'e hasn't," answered the voice of the corporal; "but w'y, then, wouldn't his folks be 'ere a-waitink for 'im? 'Ow-ever, I'll give 'im hevery chance. It's now five-and-twenty minutes after three. I'll give 'im huntill six, but if 'e doesn't turn hup by then, we'll start away for the shore without 'im."

"Six o'clock!" thought the boy in the clock. The very time his mother had told him she was going to be home again "with something very nice for him." And now she and his brave papa would walk right into the arms of these dreadful English soldiers, and he could not stop them!

Whang!

What a noise! It startled Brinton so much that he nearly knocked the clock over; and then he realized that it was only the clock striking half-past three.

Half-past three! He had been in there only half an hour, and already he was so tired he could hardly stand up. How could he ever endure it until four, until half-past four, five, six!

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"If only something, some accident even, will happen to detain papa and mamma!" he thought. But how much more likely, it occurred to him, that his father, having but a short leave of absence, would hasten, and arrive before six.

"Tick-tock," went the clock.

"How slow, how very slow!" thought Brinton, and he wished there were only some way of hurrying up the time, so that the soldiers would go away.

Still the soldiers stayed in the room, all but one, who had gone into the kitchen to watch from there.

"Tick-tock," went the clock, and "whang-whang-whang-whang!" Only four o'clock. Brinton began to fear that he could not hold out much longer.

"Tick-tock," went the clock. Each swing of the pendulum marked one second, Brinton's mother had told him. If he could only make it swing quicker, so that the seconds would fly a little faster.

"Why not try to?" Brinton was on the point of breaking down. He was desper-

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ate. He felt that he must do something. He took hold of the pendulum and gave it a little push. It yielded readily to his pressure. None of the soldiers seemed to notice it. He gave it another push. The result was the same. Brinton began to pick up courage, and he pushed the pendulum to and fro, to and fro, to and fro.

He tried to keep it swinging at a perfectly even rate, and apparently he succeeded. At any rate, the soldiers appeared to notice nothing different. Yet Brinton was sure that he was causing the old clock to tick off its seconds at a considerably livelier gait than usual. Half-past four came almost before he knew it, but by five o'clock Brinton began to realize that he was very, very tired. He had already stood absolutely still in that cramped, dark, close case, and he had pushed the pendulum first with one hand and then with the other in that narrow space until both felt sore and lame. Yet now that he had once begun, he did not dare leave off, and still it did not seem possible that he could keep it up.

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The soldiers had kept very quiet for a long time. Brinton thought that two of them must be napping.

At five o'clock the soldier who was awake aroused the corporal and the other private, whom the corporal sent to relieve the man on guard in the kitchen.

"I must 'ave slept mighty sound," remarked the corporal. "I'd never believe I'd been asleep an hour, if I didn't see it hon the clock."

"No soigns av any wan yit," reported the man who had been in the kitchen, whom Brinton judged to be an Irishman. "Be's ye going to wait till six?"

"Yes," answered the corporal. "But no longer."

Then they began talking about the British fleet that was cruising in Long Island Sound, and about the ship on which they were temporarily quartered until they could join the main body of the army, and how a neighbor of Brinton's father and mother had been down at the store when a ship's boat had put in for water, and how he had told the

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officer in charge that Major Hall, Brinton's father, was expected home for a few hours that day, and what a fine opportunity it would be to make an important capture.

The clock struck half-past five.

"H'm!" grunted the corporal. "It doesn't seem that late; but, you know, you can't tell anythink about anythink in this blarsted country."

Brinton now began to be very much afraid that his father would come before the soldiers left. He wanted to move the pendulum faster and faster, but after what the corporal had said he did not dare to. Then, when the men lapsed into silence, it suddenly came over Brinton how dreadfully weary he was, how all his bones ached, and how much, how very much, he wanted to cry. But he felt that his father's only chance of safety lay in his keeping the pendulum swinging to and fro, to and fro.

At last, however, came the welcome sound of the corporal's voice bidding the men get ready to start.

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Whang - whang - whang - whang - whang-whang!

"Fall in!" ordered the corporal. "Forward, march!"

As the sound of their footsteps died away, Brinton, all of a tremble, opened the door of the clock and stumbled out. He knelt at the window and watched the retreating forms of the redcoats. As they disappeared down the road he heard a noise behind him, and jumped up with a start.

There stood his father!


The next instant Brinton was sobbing in his arms.

Brinton's mother came into the room. "Dear me!" she said; "what ever can be the matter with the clock? It's half an hour fast."

V

NANCY HANSON'S PROJECT

What a Delaware Girl did after the Battle of Brandywine in 1777

T was in the old Quaker town of Wilmington, Delaware, and it was the evening of the day on which the battle of Brandywine had been fought. The country people were coming into town in sledges, and in heavy low carts with solid wheels made of slices from great tree-trunks, loaded with butter, eggs, milk, and vegetables; for the following day was market-day. Market-day came every Fourth-day (Wednesday) and every Seventh-day (Saturday). Then the carts drew up in a long line in Market Street, with their tail-boards to the sidewalk, and the farmers sold their produce to the towns-people.

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ple, who jostled one another as they walked up and down in front of the market-carts—a custom of street markets still carried on in Wilmington.

Friend William Stapler stopped, on his way to market in his cart, at Elizabeth Hanson's house in Shipley Street, to leave a dozen eggs and two pounds of butter, as he did each Tuesday and Friday evening. Elizabeth came to the door with a basket for half a peck of potatoes. William Stapler took off his broad-brimmed hat, and slowly rubbed his horny hand over his short-cut, stubbly gray hair.

"Ah! I tell thee, 'Lizabeth, they're a-doin' great things up above Chadd's Ford. I hear th' canning a-boomin' away all day to-day. They spare not the brother's blood when th' Adam is aroused within them. They stan' in slippery places, 'Lizabeth."

"Does thee think they're fighting, William?"

"Truly I think they are. Ah! I tell thee, 'Lizabeth, they're differen' 'n when I was young. Then we only feared the In-

NANCY HANSON'S PROJECT

juns, 'n' now it's white men agin white men. They tuck eight young turkeys of mine, 'n' only paid me ten shillin' fer 'em."

"But, oh, William, I do hope they're not fighting! I expect my son-in-law, Captain William Bellach, and his friend, Colonel Tilton, will stop here on their way to join General Washington: and they may arrive to-night."

"Ah, 'Lizabeth, I've lifted up my voice in testimony agin the young men goin' to the wars an' sheddin' blood. 'F a man diggeth a pit an' falleth into it himself, who shall help him out thereof? Half a peck o' potatoes, did thee say, 'Lizabeth?"

During the evening rumors became more exciting, and it was said that the Americans had been defeated, and were retreating towards Philadelphia. Late that night Captain Bellach and Colonel Tilton arrived at Elizabeth Hanson's house.

"I've heard the rumors, mother," said Captain Bellach. "I don't believe 'em; but even if there was a file of British at the

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door here, I would be too tired to run away from them."

Pretty Nancy Hanson spoke up. "But, Billy, they would not only send thee and thy friend to the hulks if they caught thee, but they might be rude to us women were they to find thee here."

"Yes, sister-in-law, if I thought there was any danger, I would leave instantly; but the British, even if they have beaten us, will be too tired to come here to-night."

"I agree with my friend Will, Mistress Nancy," said Colonel Tilton. "Moreover, our horses are too tired to take us farther to-night."

About two o'clock in the morning the silence of the deserted streets of the town was broken by a rattling and jingling of steel, the heavy, measured tread of feet, and sharp commands given in a low voice.

Nancy Hanson awakened at the noise, and jumping out of bed, ran to the window and looked out into the moonlit street beneath. A file of red-coated soldiers were

NANCY HANSON'S PROJECT

moving by towards the old Bull's Head Tavern. The cold moonlight glistened on their gun-barrels and bayonets as they marched. Nancy ran to her mother's room and pounded vigorously on the door.

"Mother! Mother! Waken up!" she cried; "the British are come to town, sure enough!"

The family were soon gathered around the dull light of a candle, the gentlemen too hastily awakened to have their hair *en queue*, the ladies in short gowns and petticoats; Elizabeth Hanson wore a great starched night-cap perched high upon her head.

"You were right, sister-in-law," said Captain Bellach, "and I was wrong. The best thing we can do now is to march out and take our chances."

"So say I," assented the Colonel.

"It's all well enough for thee, Billy, to talk of marching out and taking thy chances," said Nancy; "thee has thy black citizen's dress; but Colonel Tilton is in uniform."

"True; I forgot."

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"It does not matter," said the Colonel.

"Yes, but it does!" cried Nancy. "Stay now until morning, and I think I can find thee citizen's clothes. I have a project, too, to get thee off. For mother's sake, though, we must hide thy uniform, for if it is found here, she will be held responsible. Billy, thee will have to go with thy friend back to the bedroom and bring us his things as soon as he can take them off. Thee must lie abed, Colonel Tilton."

Nancy's plans were carried into execution. The bricks in one of the up-stairs fireplaces were taken up, the sand beneath them removed, and the Colonel's uniform deposited in the vacant place, over which the bricks were carefully replaced.

In the gray of the morning Peggy Allison and Hannah Shallcross, on their way to market, each with a basket on her arm, met in front of Elizabeth Hanson's house. A company of soldiers had halted in Shipley Street, and their arms were stacked before Elizabeth's door. The red-coated soldiers

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were lounging and talking and smoking. Some officers sat around a fire near by warming their hands, for the morning was chill.

"'Tis a shame!" said Hannah Shallcross, vigorously—" 'tis a shame to see these red-coats parading our streets as bold as a brass farthing. I only wish I was John Stedham the constable; I'd have 'em in the Smoke-house¹ or the stocks in a jiffy, I tell thee!"

She spoke loudly and sharply. A young British officer, who was passing, stepped briskly up, and tapped her on the arm.

"Madam," said he, "do you know that you are all prisoners? Be advised by me, and return quietly home until the town is in order."

However patriotic Hannah might be, she did not think it advisable to disregard this order, and both dames retreated in a flutter. As the young officer stood looking after them, the house door opposite him opened,

¹The Smoke-house was a small stone structure something like a sentry-box, only with an iron door and grated windows. In this negroes, petty criminals, vagrants, and drunkards were confined. It stood at the junction of the two most important streets of the town.

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and Nancy Hanson appeared upon the doorstep. She had dressed herself carefully in her fine quilted petticoat and best flowered overdress, and looked as pretty and fresh as an April morning.

"Friend," said she, in a half-doubtful, half-timid voice. The young officer whipped off his cocked hat, and bent stiffly, as you might bend a jack-knife.

"Madam, yer servant," he answered. He spoke with a slight brogue, for he was an Irish gentleman.

"We have a friend with us," said Nancy, "who hath been compelled for a time to keep his bed. He was brought here last night on account of the battle, and was too weary to go farther. Our neighbor, Friend John Stapler, across the street, hath thick stockings, and I desire to get, if I can, a pair from him, as, thee may know, in cases of dropsy the legs are always cold. I am afraid to cross the street with these soldiers in it. Would thee escort me?"

"Madam, you do me infinite honor in desiring me escort," said the young officer,

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bowing more deeply than before, for Nancy was very pretty.

Friend John Stapler was a very strict Friend, and as such was inclined to favor the Royalist side; still, he was willing to do a kindly turn for a neighbor. He was a wrinkled, weazened little man, whose face, with its pointed nose and yellowish color, much resembled a hickory-nut.

"Hum-m-m!" ejaculated he, when Nancy, who had left the officer at the door, stated the case to him—"hum-m-m! thus it is that intercourse with the world's people defileth the chosen. Still, I may as well help thee out o' the pother. Hum-m-m! I suppose my small-clothes would hardly be large enough, would they?" and he looked down at his withered little legs.

"I hardly think so," said Nancy, repressing a smile, as she pictured to herself the tall, dignified Colonel in little John Stapler's small clothes.

"Well, well," said he, "I'll just step out the back way, and borrow a suit from John Benson. He's the fattest man I know."

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He soon returned with the borrowed clothes, which they wrapped up in as small a bundle as possible, after which Nancy rejoined the officer at the door.

"'Tis a largish bundle of stockings," observed he, as he escorted her across the street again.

"They are thick stockings," she answered, demurely.

When they reached home, she invited her escort and his brother-officers, who were gathered around the fire near by, to come in and take a cup of coffee—an offer they were only too glad to accept, after their night march.

"Gentlemen," said Nancy, as they sat or stood around drinking their hot coffee, "I suppose you have no desire to retain our afflicted friend a prisoner? The doctor, who is with him at present, thinks it might benefit him to be removed to the country. I spoke to my friend whom I saw this morning, and he promised to send a coach. May he depart peaceably when the coach comes?"

"Faith," said the young Irish officer, "he may depart. He shall not be molested. I command here at present."

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"What is the matter with the invalid?" inquired another officer.

"He appeareth to have the dropsy," answered Nancy, gravely.

In about half an hour an old-fashioned coach, as large as a small dwelling-house, and raised high from the ground on great wheels, lumbered up to the door. The steps were let down, or unfolded, until they made a kind of step-ladder, by which the passenger ascended to the coach which loomed above. The door stuck, in consequence of being swollen by the late rains, and was with difficulty opened. The officers stood around, waiting the appearance of the invalid, and the young Irishman who had been Nancy's escort waited at the door to help her in, for she was to accompany her afflicted relative to the ferry.

The house door opened, and she appeared, bearing a pillow and blanket to make the sick man comfortable. She arranged these, and stepped back into the house to see him moved. Then, with a shuffling of feet, the pretended victim of dropsy appeared, dressed

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in plain clothes, and so enormously puffed out that there was scarcely room for him in the passageway. The so - called doctor, dressed in black, and wearing a pair of black-glass spectacles, assisted the invalid on one side, and Nancy supported him on the other. The dropsical one groaned at every step, and groaned louder than ever as they pushed, squeezed, and crowded him up the steps and into the coach. Nancy and the doctor followed, and the Irish officer put up the steps and clapped to the door, while Nancy smiled a farewell through the window to him as the great coach rumbled away towards the Christiana River.

“Oddzooks!” exclaimed one of the officers, “that is the fattest Quaker I ever saw.”

He would have been surprised if he had seen the fat Quaker draw a stout pillow from under his waistcoat after the coach had moved away, while the doctor stripped some back court-plaster from the back of his spectacles, and instead of the invalid and the physician appeared two decidedly military-looking gentlemen.

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The coach and its occupants had lumbered out of sight for some time, and the young officer still remained lounging near the door of Mistress Hanson's house, when an orderly, splashed with mud from galloping over yesterday's battle-field, clattered up to the group.

"Which is Major Fortescue?" he asked, in his sharp, military voice.

"I am," answered the young Irish officer.

"Order for you, sir;" and he reached the Major a folded paper, sealed with a blotch of wax as red as blood. He opened it, and read:

"You will immediately arrest two men, officers in the rebel army, known as Colonel Tilton and Captain Bellach. Information has been lodged at headquarters that they are now lying concealed at Mistress Elizabeth Hanson's in Wilmington town. You will report answer as once. By order of

"COLONEL ROBERT WYCHERLY, R. A.,
Com. 5th Div. H. M. A.
in the Province of Pennsylvania.

*To Major Allan Fortescue,
Commander at Wilmington,
in the Lower County of Newcastle."*¹

¹Newcastle County, Delaware, formerly a portion of Penn's Proprietary Government in the Americas.

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"Stop them!" roared Major Fortescue, as soon as he could catch his breath. He gave a sharp order to the soldiers lounging near; they seized their arms, and the whole party started at double-quick for the ford of Christiana River, half a mile away, whither the coach had directed its course.

Meanwhile, the fugitives had arrived at the bank of the river, where they found that the ferryman was at the other side, and his boat with him. He was lying on the stern seat, in the sun, and an empty whiskey bottle beside him sufficiently denoted the reason of his inertia. When the Colonel called to him, he answered in endearing terms, but moved not; and when the officer swore, the ferryman reproved him solemnly. Affairs were looking gloomy, when Captain Bellach, who had been running up and down the embankment that kept the river from overflowing the marsh-lands that lay between it and the hill on which the town stood, gave a shout which called the Colonel and Nancy to him. They found that he had discovered an old scow half hidden

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among the reeds; it was stuck fast in the mud, and it was only by great exertions that the two gentlemen pushed it off the ooze into the water. The Colonel then took Nancy in his arms, and carried her across the muddy shore to the boat, where he deposited her; then pushing off the scow, he leaped aboard himself.

"Lackaday for my new silk petticoat, all spotted and ruined!" cried Nancy. "I'd rather have been taken prisoner at once!" And she looked down ruefully upon the specks of blue marsh mud that had been splashed upon that garment.

Neither of the men answered. The boat leaked very badly when it was fairly out in the water, and the Colonel was forced to bail it out with his hat. The Captain sat in the middle of the boat, paddling it with a piece of board. His hat had blown off, and his black silk small-clothes were covered with mud. The tide was running strongly, and as the boat drifted down the stream, it was swung round and round in spite of the Captain's efforts to keep it

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straight, while the leak gained on them, until Nancy, with a sigh, was compelled to take her best beaver hat, ribbons and all, and help the Colonel bail.

They were scarcely more than half across when Major Fortescue and his squad of soldiers dashed up to the bank. They ran along the embankment, keeping pace with the boat as it drifted with the tide.

"Halt!" cried the officer; but no one in the boat answered. "Halt, or I shoot!" But Captain Bellach only paddled the harder.

"Make ready! Take aim!—"

"Down, for your life!" cried Colonel Tilton, sharply, dragging Nancy down into the bottom of the boat, where Captain Bellach flung himself beside them. It was the work of a moment. The next instant—"Fire!" they heard the Royalist order, sharply, from the bank.

"Cra-a-a-ack!" rattled the muskets, and the bullets hummed venomously around the boat like a swarm of angry hornets.

None of the fugitives were hurt, though

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two of the bullets struck the side of the boat; but Nancy's petticoat was entirely ruined by the mud and water in the bottom. Before the redcoats could reload, they had reached the farther shore, and run into a cornfield near by, in which they were entirely hidden. Captain Bellach wanted to go up the stream and thrash the drunken ferryman; but the Colonel and Nancy dissuaded him, and they made the best of their way to Dover, which they reached after a weary journey. There Nancy, who considered it safer to absent herself from home while the British retained possession of Wilmington, found herself the heroine of the hour; and she was fêted and dined and made much of, until it would have completely turned a less sensible little head than hers.


In after years, when her husband presented her to President Washington, "Ah, Mistress Tilton," said his Excellency, "your husband should indeed value an affection that not only endangered a life, but even sacrificed a fine silk petticoat, for his sake."

VI

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*A Treasure Hunt in 1777, when Washington was
at Valley Forge*

I

T behooves me now, while the incidents are still fresh in my mind, and while I lie idle here at Valley Forge, to set in writing to the best of my ability what I know of the traitor Henderson, his arrest, and escape. I hope that my friends will not take it amiss that I use the personal pronoun, for so much was I concerned in the affair that my poor wits will not allow me to tell the story as could a story-writer. Indeed, I had much rather that Jack told it; but he being laid up with a sword-thrust through the arm can do naught

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but peer over my shoulder and nod approval, which the same I sorely need, having no faith in myself and but little in Jack, our hands being more accustomed to the grasp of the steel than of the quill. And now, with this small apology for my plain tale, I beg your indulgence.

You must know that our army has been lying here at bleak Valley Forge for three long dreary months, and a very hard time we have had of it—food and fuel being scarce, and work still scarcer—for the British are comfortably housed in Philadelphia, and we are too weak to move against them. Often I have wondered, and perhaps his Excellency has also, what would become of us if the British were to attack us. Our salvation doubtless is the gayety of Philadelphia, where the redcoats are living as if war was as distant as the day of judgment.

Death and sickness have made many gaps in our ragged ranks; but what blows cold for one blows hot for another, and Jack and I have received captain's commissions, whereas we might, but for the bitterness of the

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winter, still be lieutenants. Captain's uniforms, however, we have not, nor is it always possible to tell officers from men, so universal are our rags.

It was some few days before Christmas that his Excellency sent for me, and, elated with the prospect of active duty, I hastened to his house. He received me alone, and bade me seat myself by the log fire while he busied himself with some documents. I wish my pen could trace on paper my emotions as I watched him at his work. Methought the lines of care on his face were deeper than usual; that he was worried with the fear of some disaster; that his shoulders, as you know, so bravely square, were drooping with the weight of great anxiety; that his voice, so deep and calm, quavered with emotion. And, in truth, when you think of our deplorable condition, you will doubt not there were cares which would have broken a less-exalted spirit and crushed a heart less brave than his Excellency's.

I mind me well the words which he spoke.

"Captain," said he, "I have for you a

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dangerous commission, and one of great importance. I need not tell you how badly we need food and clothing. Some of our brave lads have naught but straw and rags between their feet and the snow. We must have money. Some of our good friends in Philadelphia have been working for us, and have accumulated stores and gold. The stores may reach us in a week or two, but the money I must have at once."

He was silent for a few moments, thinking perhaps of what might happen if the money came not, for the men were months behind in their pay, and many threatened to leave the ranks unless it was soon forthcoming.

"We have," his Excellency continued, "a friend, a Mr. Henderson, through whom this gold is to be transmitted to us. It is to this man I desire you to go and return with all possible despatch. But"—and his Excellency hesitated—"you must needs use extreme care and discretion. The task is one of no small risk, and I must tell you that within the last month two messengers

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who have received money from Mr. Henderson have been seized while making their way back to our lines. The loss has been a grievous one; use, therefore, the utmost care, for if— But you know, sir, how necessary it is to our welfare. I will say no more. Do you select a comrade—and God speed you!”

I was eager for the adventure, and so was Jack, whom, of course, I asked to accompany me; and furbishing up our arms and clothing, we started in high spirits and full of hope—but not of food, for we trusted to our foraging for sustenance.

The home of Mr. Henderson was on Chestnut Hill, which was some eighteen miles from Valley Forge. Knowing that the British were catching no colds, and stirring not far from their hearths in Philadelphia, Jack and I tramped along the Perkiomen road, making what despatch we could, and in due time, and without incident, we reached Mr. Henderson’s house, and were well received. He was a tall, dark man, with a foxy face, shifty eyes, and a manner I did not like.

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But he was a generous and kindly host, and my prejudices vanished under the influence of the well-cooked food and goodly claret; for it was a comfort to once more sit down to a hot and well-served meal.

A pleasant chat and a pipeful of good Virginia tobacco made the evening a pleasant one, for Jack and I had determined to start back late at night and reach camp again in the morning, thereby trusting to darkness to shield us from any stray parties of the British. But in this plan we were disappointed, for no sooner did I mention it to Mr. Henderson than he exclaimed that it was impossible.

"Impossible!" I cried.

"Quite," he said, calmly. "I have not the money."

I felt sick at heart, for his assurances that he was glad to see us, that he was expecting us, and hoped that we should perform our part of the undertaking as successfully as he had his, had convinced me that all was right, nor had I, being full of this impression, asked him directly about the money.

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Seeing my confusion and evident distress, he cried: "Be not alarmed, though, as I expect it before mid-day on the morrow. Meanwhile it will be my duty and my pleasure to make you as comfortable as possible."

"We can do naught but wait," I said.

"Ay," cried Jack, "and lie cosily in a bed of feathers," Jack was ever a glutton for comfort.

"You'll mind not if I put you in the garret," said Henderson. And added, hastily, "You can be both together, and the beds are good; we have not room otherwise."

At this I marvelled somewhat, the house being large; but thought no more of it. Our host arose to lead us to our cots.

"'Tis somewhat early," Jack whispered to me, the hour not being greater than eight.

"Ay," I said, "but not for soft beds." Jack gave a grunt of satisfaction.

The attic was big with emptiness. In the middle was a solitary chair; but we were accustomed to roughing it and minded not,

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although when we were alone we laughed a little, and said small things about the scant furnishing of so large a house, owned by such a wealthy man as Mr. Henderson was reported to be.

We were quickly asleep in the warm embrace of the great soft mattresses; and whether it was some noise or the rich food of the supper that worried me I know not, but I awoke soon and sat up with every sense acute, as does often happen after one has had terrifying dreams. Jack was breathing softly, and no sound broke the stillness of the night. The time I knew not. Twice I laid back and tried to sleep, but my nerves were on edge with something, and I could not keep my eyes closed. Angry with myself at what I considered weakness for an old campaigner, I at length got up, and slipping on my small-clothes, and thick great woollen stockings my dear mother knit so well, I walked up and down the room, and when I tired of that gazed out of the window.

The night was fitfully dark, the sky was thick with heavy clouds, and the moon shone

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through now and then, lighting dimly the park over which I gazed and the long avenue leading from the front of the house. Methought I saw something move in the shadow of the trees, and watching carefully when next the moon peeped from the blackness overhead I saw it again. It is a horse, I thought, and opening the window, I listened; sure enough, I heard the stamping of a restless animal on the snow, and the next moment the whinny of another beast.

I sprang to Jack's bedside at once, and shook him roughly.

"The money has come!" I cried. He jumped up with the promptness of a soldier.

"We can start to-night," I exclaimed, "and reach camp by daylight!"

"Ay," he cried, drowsily. "His Excellency must not wait. But what a nice bed!"

We dressed quickly, but I, having the start, was ready first.

"Hurry," I said; "we have no time to waste; 'tis midnight, at least."

"Ay," cried Jack, adjusting his sword, and following me across the attic.

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I laid my hand upon the door-knob and pulled. It did not yield. Again I pulled, impatiently. The door remained shut.

"We are locked in!" I exclaimed, amazed.

"And from the outside!" cried Jack.

I shook the door. It was heavy, and well bolted.

We looked at each other blankly; the one question formed on the lips of each.

I hurried back to the window. There were two horses tied to the trees. Evidently Mr. Henderson did not wish us to meet his visitors.

Jack shared my suspicions. "Why did he make us retire so early? Why did he put us away up here?" he exclaimed.

"I'm going to find out," said I, grimly.

"How?" asked Jack.

I pointed out of the window. Some twenty feet below was a little balcony upon which, doubtless, opened another window.

"'Tis a big drop and dangerous," said Jack.

"The sheets!" I exclaimed, taking one

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from my bed and rolling it up like a rope. In a minute we had four tied together, and, with knots at intervals, it reached within a few feet of the balcony.

"Let me go," Jack pleaded.

"Obey orders, sir!" I cried, sternly. "Do you remain here and guard well the door. Keep an eye also to the balcony; perchance I may call for help." And we agreed that the signal should be the hoot of an owl, which we both could well imitate. Jack pressed my heavy pistol into my hand, but I said "no," and took my trusty blade instead, for what use was the pistol after its first bark, while the steel was always ready.

Then carefully I swung myself out, and with some little swaying against the rough stones of the wall, and with blistered palms, I reached, softly and safely, the little balcony. The window was dark, which was well, for my plan had doubtless been spoiled had there been lights and people in the room. It was no time for hesitation. I pushed at the window. It was latched.

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"Break the glass," whispered Jack from above, seeing my predicament.

It was the only thing to do, and selecting with care the little pane nearest the latch, I sent the hilt of my sword through it. Would they hear the crash? I listened intently. There was no sound except my own breathing and the moaning of the wind in the trees. It was the work of a moment to open the window now, and I stepped into the darkness of the room, and quietly shook the clinging snow from my heavy boots. Hesitating which way to turn, and fearing to knock against something and arouse the house, I waited patiently for a stray moonbeam to light my way. Presently the darkness was softened, and I discerned the white bulk of a bed close by. Creeping along the side of this I reached the wall, and soon found the door. With trembling hand I turned the knob, and dreading the creak, which did not come, I swung it open. Beyond was a hall, and by the light of a lamp on the floor below I found myself within a few steps of the head of the stairs. There was a distant

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murmur of voices, and though I knew not what instant some one might step out upon me, there in the open hall, I hesitated.

II

Suppose my suspicions unfounded? What if the door of the bedroom had not been locked, but only stuck fast as some doors will? What would Mr. Henderson think of me? I know not how long I should have foolishly stood there thinking, when the time was for action, had I not been suddenly called to my good senses by the banging of the door I had opened, which, sounding like a thunder-clap, bade fair to arouse the whole house. Then calling myself fool, and taking the risk in hand, I took to the stairs, and as fast as caution and my feet would carry me sped down them, breathless and alert. The lower hall was long and dimly lighted, dividing the house in two parts, and with rooms opening on it from each side. On my left the doors were shut, nor

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could I through the key-holes discern any glimmer of light. On the right the first door stood quite open, the second was shut and dark, but from the third, which was not quite shut, came a stream of light, and hearing the sound of voices, I knew that in there were my host and his suspicious guests.

So far Fortune was with me, and I made bold to court her favor still further. Should I go down the hall to the third door, or enter the first room, and trust to it being connected, as in most country houses, with the others in line? In the hall I should be exposed to the first comer, with no chance of concealment. I chose the room.

The first one was a large and impressive apartment, lighted only by the dying embers of a small fire, and soft under foot with a heavy rich rug. The door of the second room was wide open, and I saw that the third room was divided from the second by a large portière. So was I still fortunate. I could now hear the voices plainly, and I judged three or four men were there. If they were enemies, and I was discovered—

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But it was no time for idle thoughts. Taking my fear by the throat, and with a firm grasp upon my courage, I stepped softly into the second room, and drew up behind the curtain and near the corner.

Their voices were clear. Henderson was talking, with the others now and again interjecting sharp questions.

"Here they lie," he was saying, "thinking themselves secure, and fearing no attack. To the east are a few earthworks and a line of trenches, and there and on the south and north are the outposts well placed, nor could any body of men draw close upon them unobserved. But—"

"Where, then, is the good of the plan?" asked a voice, sharply, and it had that in it which made me certain the owner was of the military.

"Ah, but I am coming to that," said Henderson. "Here have I obtained for you the fortifications on the east and south and north, but note you this, that on the west there is naught. Ay, naught but a broken and wooded country through which

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you could draw quite upon them without 'being discovered. And how will you flank them and get upon their rear but by this road?"

At this, guessing all heads would be bent close over the plan, I made bold to try to draw aside one corner of the curtain to peep upon the scene, but whether I was too nervous or the curtain too securely fastened I could not find space to look through at the corner, and dared not try in the centre.

"'Tis clear enough," said one of the officers. "And now, Henderson, your terms?"

"Ay, terms!" cried Henderson, somewhat fiercely. "Do you think I risk my neck for nothing? I have done much for you, and what have I got in return? What kind of friends have you been?"

"We have not been friends with you, nor do we intend to be," said one, whose voice I had not yet heard. "This is a business—ay, and one I detest!—we ask you for your terms."

"Well, well," grumbled Henderson. "First then, must I have—and in gold, too—for, mind you, I—"

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A touch upon my arm caused me to spring back with an exclamation dying in my throat, and my sword raised.

A slip of a girl stood before me, with finger on her lips.

Henderson's voice sounded angrily from the other room. I was about to hear from his own lips that which would convict him of treachery, and yet, although at that moment was he doubtless saying those important and condemning words, did I not hear one syllable of them, but stood in amazement before the girl. Thrice she beckoned me to follow her before I collected my senses and obeyed. Softly as I trod, did she tread more softly, as she led me through the front room, out in the passage, and into the front room on the other side of the hall. Here a goodly fire was burning, but there was no other light.

Not until the door was shut did she speak. Then, standing with her back to the fire, she asked, "You are from General Washington?"

"Ay," I said, shortly.

"For money from Philadelphia?"

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"Which I hope to get," said I.

"'Twill be placed in your hands to-morrow."

"After what I have heard," said I, "I have some doubt of that."

Although she purposely stood so that her face was in the shadow, I could see her trembling, and there was a quaver in her voice as she asked, "And what have you heard?"

"Much," said I; "and of what, you well know."

"And seen?"

"For the matter of that, naught but the locked door of my bedroom and two horses stamping in the snow."

"Ah!" she cried. "Then why think you that you will not get the money?"

"'Tis hard to trust traitors," said I.

The word struck home. She shivered and swayed from side to side, and I feared me would fall in a swoon, but with a great exertion she recovered, and half leaning on the table that stood between us, strove hard to keep back the sobs which rose to

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her lips. It was in vain, for brave as she was at heart, her strength was small, and half falling across the table she gave way to the emotion which could not be restrained. Nor was I unaffected to see her sorrow and to hear her moaning, "Oh, father! Oh, father!"

It was over in a minute or two, but though her heart was brave her nerves were much shaken.

"I do not believe it!" she cried, at last; "you heard nothing, you saw nothing. Why are you suspicious? Father is a—is—a—" But here words failed her, and she gazed at me mutely.

"'Tis my duty to arrest him," I said.

"No, no!" she cried. "Oh, you must not; you will not! Listen. General Washington needs the money much, very much, does he not? The men are starving; they have no clothes; they must have money?"

"Ay," I said; "'tis true enough."

"Then listen: you will get the money tomorrow. Yes, you will. And if my father gives you the money, how can you think he

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is a traitor? He cannot be a traitor, then; he must be a true man."

"Ay," I said; "but the men with him now, are they not British officers?"

"And if they are," she cried, "has he not to be friends with both sides? Else how could we live here? Else how could he get the money from the patriots in Philadelphia? Oh, believe me, he is not a traitor; he is a true man."

I shook my head. Suspicion was strong within me.

"Oh," she pleaded, "will you not wait? Wait until to-morrow. Then if you do not get the money—why— Oh, you will get it! Can you not wait?"

"And give him time to escape?" I asked.

"No," she cried—"no, he shall not. He shall not leave the house. Can you not trust me? He is my father. I love him. You will break my heart. Wait until to-morrow. And then—believe me—you will get the money."

It was hard. I knew not which way to turn. My duty was clear; it was a risk to wait;

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and yet—and yet— I looked at the girl's sweet face, wet with tears and eager with hope.

I put out both my hands. "I do trust you; I will wait," I said.

We stood there silently for some moments, nor did I have anything to say, until at last a question forced itself to my lips.

"And who are you?" I asked.

The answer was so low and soft that I could barely hear it, but for many a long day it sang sweetly in my ears; it was only one word, and that word was "Kitty."

I returned to my room by the stairs, unlocked the door, the key being on the outside, and found Jack impatient and disturbed. I told him what had happened, and hardly had the telling ceased before we were both sound asleep once more.

III

The sun was high the next day before we were awakened by a knocking on the door, and the inquiry if we were ready for break-

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fast. As a soldier always carries his appetite with him, it was not long before we were down-stairs. Mr. Henderson himself bade us good-morning, and saying he had some business to attend to went into the library, and left us alone at our breakfast. The girl Kitty was not to be seen; and though my eyes were aching with endeavor to recall her as she appeared in the fire-lighted room the night before, I must needs be patient.

After our breakfast, Mr. Henderson placed the house at our disposal, but warned us not to go outside, which we were well determined not to do, nor to take our eyes off him. He had little to say, for which I was glad, for I liked not the man nor his actions, and I can say the same for Jack, both of us being full of suspicion as to his movements. Much of this was, however, removed, for early in the afternoon there came up to the house, astride a great horse, a Quaker direct from Philadelphia, and with him the gold we were expecting, and which Mr. Henderson at once turned over to us with many protestations of sorrow that it was not a larger sum.

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Now were we happy indeed, for the money would bring joy to many a poor soldier at bleak Valley Forge, and do much towards saving the cause and cheering the men.

We were for being off at once, but Mr. Henderson said, "No." The Quaker had reported the presence of a number of red-coats along the road who were foraging for Christmas, which day was to be celebrated with great feasting in Philadelphia. Mr. Henderson counselled us to stay at the house until nightfall, and then to make our way by an unfrequented path to a hunter's cabin some five miles on the way to Valley Forge, to lay there until daybreak, whence, as it was not likely any of the British would risk so near an approach to McLane's troop, we could push on to our lines in safety. It was a good plan, and we agreed to abide by it, and so lounged around, restless and impatient, until dusk. Then, for convenience in carrying, we placed the money in two bags and were ready. But Mr. Henderson, who seemed ever careful of our comfort, de-

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tained us at the last moment, and sent orders to the kitchen for a lunch.

"The night will be long and dreary in the cabin," said he. "A bottle of wine and a cold supper, when you reach there, will make you sleep sounder."

Instead of the old negro who had been despatched for it, who should come back with the lunch in a small hamper but Kitty. Eager was I to say a word of farewell, but the father cried, harshly, "What do you here, girl?"

"I brought the lunch, father," said she, quietly. "The gentlemen will need it; and here," she said, handing me a small package, "is a sandwich to eat on the way."

"Go to your room, girl!" Henderson cried, in unseemly rage; whereat she slipped quietly away, nor did she glance back in farewell.

And then we went out into the darkness and by the path pointed out to us, Jack with the hamper, and I with Kitty's sandwich, and thinking of her.

It was a longer five miles than we had bargained for. The path was overgrown with

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brush and fallen timber, and the walking was difficult, so that we frequently stopped for breath, and shifted our bags of gold from one arm to the other. The sandwich I slipped in my pocket early in the journey to relieve Jack of the hamper which he carried until tired, and then I, and in this way, at the end of some three hours, we reached the cabin. It had evidently been in recent use. A pile of wood was close by the big fireplace, and rifts and cracks in the log walls had been recently plastered with clay. So, with a roaring fire which we soon built, it was not an uncomfortable place to pass the night. Jack was eager for the contents of the hamper, and so, in truth, was I, and we fell to heartily, toasting ourselves the meanwhile before the fire, and as satisfied a pair of soldiers as could be found in all the land. The lunch was good, the Burgundy was better, and between the two and the fire it was not long before we were nodding.

How long we slept I know not. I was awakened from a feverish dream by a shout

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from Jack, and sprang to my feet in the grasp of several men, and the cabin filled with others. In the first strength of my surprise I shook them off and sprang for my sword, but it was knocked out of my hand. I saw an upraised musket butt, there was a crashing blow upon my head, and I seemed to go whirling around and around through space, with on every side visions of hundreds of British soldiers struggling with dozens of men, all like me.

When next I came to my senses, I was lying on a cot, my head bound in a cloth and throbbing painfully, and Jack bathing my face. I caught his hand.

"Where are we?" I asked.

"In a British prison," he answered, sulkily.

I grew cold from head to foot, so cold that I thought death had claimed me. Then my whole body seemed to throb in one great heart-beat.

"And the gold?" I cried.

"In British pockets."

At this I must have lost consciousness again for some time. When I once more

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realized my surroundings, Jack was pacing up and down the room like a caged tiger.

"How did it happen?" I asked.

"We fell asleep in that accursed cabin, and the dragoons found us there, pounced on me before I was awake, knocked you on the head, seized the gold, and brought us here helter-skelter, and here we are, like two fowl fattening for the oven."

"Here? Where?" I asked.

"In Philadelphia."

I groaned. What would the men at Valley Forge do now? Why had we not pushed on through the night instead of lying idly in the cabin? Why had we taken Henderson's advice? What would General Washington think of us?

"We must get out of this?" I cried.

"How?" exclaimed Jack. "Have I not thought of that ever since we were brought here? We are in a house in the centre of the town. On the second floor. The windows are barred. Sentries surround us. How could we pass through the town in these uniforms? They have left us not even a penknife.

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I sat up painfully, and felt in my pockets.

"No," said Jack, "they searched you too."

My pockets were empty; there was nothing, nothing except—except, and I pulled it out quickly, a small, flat parcel.

"Kitty's sandwich," growled Jack; "that's all."

That was all. I opened the package mechanically, and held the bread in my hand. Kitty's sandwich! She, dear girl, was true-hearted. What a fool I should have been not to trust her! Perhaps I had been unjust with her father; perhaps—

Jack interrupted my meditations. "Give me half," he cried. "I am hungry. What is it, chicken or beef?"

I gave it to him. He lifted up the top piece. But there was no meat underneath. Instead we saw a small piece of paper, and on it writing. We read it together.

"Go not to the cabin. Danger is there."

We gazed at each other blankly—astonished, disturbed, and confused.

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"Confound that Henderson!" cried Jack at last.

"Ay," said I; "he is the traitor we thought him to be. Three times has the gold failed to reach his Excellency, and three times has Henderson betrayed the messengers."

"And those plans."

"Ay, the plans. And what could they be, but of our works at Valley Forge? Do you think the British would attack us there?"

"Right willingly. I know now there are rumors of a big move on foot; all the British officers are excited by the prospect of active work."

"Jack, we must get out of here," I cried; "one of us, at least. His Excellency must be warned."

"Ay; but, again, how?"

"There's the rub. If—"

"'Sh!" cried Jack; "the doctor's coming. Lie down."

I had involuntarily thrown myself back on the cot, and as the door opened and the visitor entered I simulated unconsciousness, and moaned and groaned as if in deep pain.

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"Your friend has not improved," said the surgeon. "I may have to send him to the hospital. If he becomes worse, do you send for me. Here are some draughts to give him; they will make him sleep."

Hardly had he gone before I was up again.

"Jack," I cried, "I have it! I will become worse—high fever, delirious, anything. There seems little chance of escape here; at the hospital there may be more, and his Excellency must be warned."

All the long afternoon we discussed the plan. Poor it was indeed, but seemingly the only one, and both of us were ready to take desperate chances. Our chief fear was that my condition might not seem bad enough to warrant the surgeon ordering me to the hospital; and at this thought I straight way began practising an excess of delirium, which Jack, knowing naught of illness or medicine, pronounced very deceptive.

When the warden brought in tea, at early evening, I feigned extreme distress, and Jack

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took occasion to repeat the surgeon's words, and so, having in a measure paved the way for it, my attack came on about two hours later. Jack shouted to the warden, and when that worthy came, bewailed my suffering and exploited his fear of my death to such good effect that a soldier was despatched in all haste for the surgeon, while we waited, trembling with expectation.

An hour must have passed before we heard the gallop of horses approach, and I, rehearsing my part, strove to clear and cool my brain, that I might not betray myself by too much or too little delirium.

"Two," whispered Jack, as the horses stopped before the house, and we heard the faint challenge of the sentry. Then there was a tramp of feet on the stairs, the door was unbolted and swung open, we saw the flash of uniforms outside as the corporal and the guard drew up in the passageway to guard the door, and then the surgeon and an orderly entered, the latter carrying a small case, and each wearing a heavy cloak, for it was a stormy night.

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"Ah, I see—I see," said the surgeon, unheeding Jack's carefully rehearsed description of my attack; "a high fever and slightly delirious."

He felt my pulse, which was beating rapidly enough, but not with any fever.

"You will take him to the hospital?" asked Jack, anxiously.

"Ah—er—well, no; you will be a good nurse for him here, and I will visit him often. Besides, he will improve after a little bleeding; and it would be unsafe to take him out in this heavy rain."

I thought my pulse would have stopped altogether at this, and as the doctor sent the orderly down-stairs for some warm water I could see Jack scowling fiercely. Our plan had failed.

The doctor proceeded to bare my left arm, and then bent close upon my breast to hear the beating of my heart.

Like a flash, in my mind sprang a new scheme, and instantly my hands closed around the surgeon's throat. One short sharp cry of surprise and he was quiet, gasp-

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ing for breath, while Jack, ever ready in an emergency, held his arms and stuffed a kerchief in his mouth. Then, silent and helpless, we wound the bedclothes around his limbs, and laid him like a trussed fowl on the cot, with a sheet over him to hide his uniform.

Then, without a word, for each understood what was to be done, we waited for the return of the orderly. As his steps sounded in the hall, I sprang behind the door, so, on entering, he should see no one but the figure on the bed and Jack. We heard a few gruff words from the guard outside, and a laugh. Clearly they were unsuspicious and had heard no noise. Then the orderly entered, and as the door closed behind him, I sprang on his back. The tankard of hot water fell with a crash; and as I bore the man down and stopped his breath I quivered with fear lest the guard would hear. But there was no sound from them, and we proceeded with nervous hands to bind the orderly much as we had done his superior.

It was the work of a moment to throw

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on their cloaks and hats, and Jack sensibly stripped the orderly of his belt and sword. No time was to be lost, and wrapping myself well up, I advanced to the door; but Jack haled me back.

"The word," he whispered; "we must have it."

I pointed to the orderly, and grasped his throat to prevent any outcry, while Jack took the gagging kerchief from his mouth.

"What is the word?" I asked.

The man remained silent.

"The word!" I cried, hoarsely, and pressing tight my fingers in my desperation. Still he would not speak, whereat Jack drew his sword and pricked him over the heart. At the touch of the cold steel the fellow found tongue.

"Burgoyne," he gasped.

"Burgoyne," I repeated, pressing the gag between his teeth.

Then boldly we flung open the door, saw the guard bolt it, and followed them down the stairs. The horses were waiting at the

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door, and as we mounted I turned to the sergeant.

"Make no noise," said I, "the sick man is sleeping; do not disturb them to-night."

He saluted, and we made off down the street, only to be stopped shortly by a gleaming bayonet.

"The countersign," demanded the soldier.

"Burgoyne!" I cried.

"Burgoyne!" echoed Jack. The man drew back, and off we galloped with glad hearts. We were free once more.

Fortunate it was that we knew Philadelphia, and so were able to make our way out, without trouble beyond a few challenges for the countersign, until at last we left Fifth Street far behind, and passed the last of the Montresor block-houses, and were clear of the lines.

"Which way?" asked Jack, as we were fairly started upon the Germantown road.

"What think you?" I asked.

"For Chestnut Hill and Henderson?" cried Jack.

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"Ay," said I. "We owe a visit there, though mayhap we will not be welcome."

IV

It was dark as pitch when, at last, we drew near Henderson's house, and were cheered by seeing the lower rooms in a blaze of light. Our quarry was at home. But how many were with him?

All was quiet outside, but from within came sounds of boisterous merriment. Cautiously we advanced, until, standing in the shadow of the trees outside the dining-room window, we could see through the curtain a party of six around the table—five in the brilliant uniform of British officers, and the sixth in plain black. This was Henderson. All were much flushed with wine and gay with laughter.

"Six," said Jack, comically pointing to the party; "and two," pointing to himself and to me.

"Makes eight," said I.

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"Yes; and two from six leaves four."

"We must not risk capture again," said I, "but we should have Henderson."

"We must have him; but—"

Jack stopped and pointed inside. Two of the officers had arisen, and followed by much good-natured chaffing, were leaving the room. The next moment they appeared at a door not far from us, and strode out. The elder was bearing in his hand a big fur-bordered coat of red, and a cap of the same color. They walked to a little arbor within easy hearing of us, and, laughing considerably, the younger man proceeded to don the cloak and hat, and with them a false beard of gray, which almost covered his face.

"As good a Santa Claus as old Henderson will make in it when he gives the children their presents in the morning!" cried the elder officer.

"A pillow under my belt would add to the effect," quoth the younger officer, critically.

"The wine that is under our belts will make us not too exacting. Now have a

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jest and a quip for each of us, and in particular some sweet phrase for Henderson."

"I like not this friendliness with a traitor," cried the young officer.

"Nor I, nor the others," said the elder man; "but we must needs find much that is distasteful in war, and this is worse than all else. I would rather hang him myself. But act your part. In the great-pocket you will find the presents. By Jove, man! we'll make this seem like merry England to-night. Do you enter by the dining-room window when I give the signal—three taps—upon it. The latch is off. Now, Santa Claus, your cue is coming."

"Trust me," cried the young officer, gayly, as the other re-entered the house. "I was never so drunk I could not act."

The door banged shut, and Jack and I sprang together to the little arbor. A few quick steps and our pistols were pressed against the startled officer's head.

"A word, and you are a dead man," said Jack, sternly.

"Strip off those clothes," cried I, for now

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a plan was ripe in my mind for carrying off Henderson, and that in safety to ourselves.

Off came the cloak and cap and whiskers, and then putting a convenient kerchief in his mouth, we bound his hands and feet as best we might with his belt and mine, and laid him tenderly on a settee.

Then I donned the cloak and cap of red and the beard of gray, and strutted about the arbor to Jack's no small amusement, although I wager the young officer we had despoiled liked it not one particle.

Then sharp and clear came the three taps on the window.

"The signal!" I exclaimed. "Quick, Jack, do you go to the stable and turn loose all the horses except one, for Henderson. Send them into the woods, bring up our animals and hold the three close to the window, and do you be ready to help if all goes not right."

Off went Jack, and with much determination, but rather shaky nerves, I stepped up to the window, threw it open sharply, and jumped gayly into the room.

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My advent was received with shouts of laughter, and during its long continuance I bowed right and left as became the guest of honor, nor did they stop laughing and shouting until curiosity to see what I would next do overcame their merriment.

With voice as gruff as I could make it, I wished them the good cheer of the season, and said, not untruly, that I had come a long way to share in their merriment, also that I had with me several parcels which might make their Christmas brighter; whereat one cried:

“And brought you that case of wine, Harry, that you owe me?” And there was another roar.

Now might I have had much joking over the part which I was playing, but that time was precious, and I was eager for the climax. So quickly, and with somewhat ill grace, I brought out the presents from the capacious pockets of the great-coat, and read the names on them; nor did my lack of knowledge of those present fail to add reality to the part, and so within a few minutes came

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I to the last of the packages, and none was there for Henderson.

Seeing me hesitate, and doubtless attributing it to the wine I was supposed to have drunk, the officer who had been in the garden whispered to me:

"The paper! the paper! 'Tis in the other pocket."

"And now," cried I, recovering myself, "must I present to our generous host a small reminder of our appreciation of his kindness to ourselves and to the cause," and pulling out the paper I presented it to him.

He opened it with trembling fingers, and much perturbed drew near the lamp that he might read.

"Aloud!" cried some boisterous one.

"The paper says merely," he exclaimed, "that my reward for services rendered Sir Henry Clinton will be given me by Major Montrose."

"Ay," cried that officer, who, while Henderson was speaking, had opened a casket in one corner of the room, "and it gives me pleasure to do so;" whereupon he placed

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on the table before Henderson two plump and heavy bags, and as I stared closely I recognized them. They were the very bags of gold taken from Jack and me at the hunter's cabin, and which Henderson had given us to take to his Excellency.

"A toast! a toast!" cried some one; and Henderson somewhat flushed doubtless by this open payment for his treachery, and no doubt realizing how deeply the English officers despised and detested him for his nefarious work, for a few moments hesitated, as if desirous of withdrawing. He, however, put on a bold face and lifted his glass.

"Long life to King George, and a speedy subjugation of the rebels!" he said.

My moment had come.

"No!" I cried, in a voice that made every one stop the glasses which were nearly to their lips. "No; our host is not wise in his selection. I have a toast to propose. Listen. It is 'Death to traitors!' Drink, gentlemen!"

"Death to traitors, right willingly," cried

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one, draining his glass and dashing it to pieces on the table; "but who are you?"

With one movement I cast off the cloak and cap and beard, and drew my pistols. At this some of them sank back in their seats stupefied with surprise. One only found his voice, and cried:

"What means all this?"

"That you have the honor to be our prisoners," cried a great voice from the window, and Jack sprang to my side, and two more big pistols were presented at the astonished guests.

Henderson was still standing at his end of the table opposite to me, speechless with terror. Jack, seeing him in this state, cried, so that the room shook with the resonance of his voice, "Drink, traitor, drink to the toast!" and levelled both pistols at his head.

White as the cloth before him, Henderson gazed into the frowning mouths of the weapons and at the stern face behind them, and trembling so that barely a drop of wine remained in it, he raised the glass to his lips, and fell limply into his chair.

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Jack was by his side in an instant, and with hand on his collar dragged him out. Then the wretch found voice. He begged us to have mercy; screamed that he was not guilty; that he was a friend to both sides, and called upon the officers to say so. But they, under the influence of my pistols and of surprise, said nothing, but just looked on, and perhaps deplored their carelessness in leaving their weapons somewhere out of reach.

Weeping and begging for mercy, Henderson was half dragged to the window by Jack, and a moment later he shouted to me that both were on horse. Then picking up the bags of gold in one hand, and keeping a pistol ready in the other, I backed to the window, and with a last shout of "Merry Christmas, gentlemen!" sprang out, and with a bound was in the saddle and following Jack and his prisoner down the avenue. Glancing back once, I saw the four officers rushing frantically to the stable, and laughed quietly to myself as I thought of their anger at finding the horses missing.

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V

On we swept, our horses, fresh with the rest they had enjoyed, speeding steadily over the heavy road. Jack rode first, beside Henderson, with the reins of both animals in one hand and a ready pistol in the other. I rode close behind, with a firm grasp upon the gold bags, which I had tied together and thrown across my saddle, and a watchful eye ahead. As for Henderson, he was silent and depressed, for as Jack had said, "a halter was itching for him," and he knew it.

So we rode for nearly half an hour, and then there happened that which it does deeply pain me to record, for by it was lost a prize, and yet — for great disappointments have their compensations — though I lost one prize, I gained another.

We were galloping along with but little fear of pursuit and easy from all thought of danger, when there arose in front of us a great shout, a quick command, and there

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bore close upon us a body of horsemen. So sharp was the surprise that they were on us before we had time to turn, and in an instant we were struggling with them. I saw Jack's pistols blaze away, and fired both of mine at the same instant, and then drew my sword just in time to parry a cut at my head. So dark it was that there was no attempt at fencing; right and left I slashed and spurred my horse forward; sometimes my steel met resistance, and oftentimes it cut through the empty air. Once I felt a sharp pain in my arm, and then, almost as I was free from the *mêlée*, I was struck on the head, and fell senseless from my horse.

When I recovered I was lying by the roadside, and some one was bathing my face gently.

"Who is it?" I asked. "Am I a prisoner?"

"It is Kitty," said a soft voice; "and you are not captured."

"Where's Jack?" I asked.

"Here," cried that worthy, coming forward with a lantern. "A narrow shave, old fellow; lucky the night was dark, or the

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blow would have split your skull instead of glancing off."

"Tell me," I said.

And then he told me. As we were in the thick of the fight with the British, a body of McLane's troopers, headed by the redoubtable Captain himself, had heard the shots, and came down on us just in time to prevent our capture, and to chase the British, who at once made off with all the speed they could.

"And Mr. —, our prisoner?" I asked.

"Escaped with the rest," said Jack, bitterly.

"And you," said I, turning to Kitty; "why are you here?"

"To save my father," said she, calmly.

"How could that be?"

"I was in the library when you surprised them all by throwing off the Santa Claus coat. Whatever wrong my father has done, he is still my father, and I love him. There was but one chance to save him. A body of British horse was stationed at the Delaware cross-roads; I ran to the stable; your

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friend, Mr. Jack, had frightened off the horses, but my own pony was still there, and he carried me swiftly to the soldiers, and then I set off with them to intercept you. Thank Heaven I was in time, and father was saved!"

"And you?" I asked.

"In the confusion I was unhorsed, and—and then I found you here wounded, and I—I stayed. Are you better now?"

"Yes. Where is my horse?"

"Here," cried Jack; "and the gold is safe too. Shall we go on to camp?"

"Ay," said I; "'tis best."

"And I," said Kitty—"I must go home again."

"Look!" cried Jack, pointing to a bright glow in the sky. "'Tis Henderson's house; McLane has fired it."

"You cannot go now," said I, softly, to Kitty; "you could not go anyhow; you are my prisoner."

"Sir!" she cried, with much indignation.

"A prisoner—of war," I repeated.

"Bring my pony!" said she.

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Jack was obedient, but I held fast the rein.

"Your home is burning," I said.

"I shall go to Mrs. Poddington's," said she.

"But you are my prisoner!" I exclaimed.

"This is absurd, sir!" she cried, impatiently. "Release the rein!"

"I will accept your parole," said I.

"And that is—"

Jack was close by, and so I whispered the words.


"Good-night," she said, very softly; nor did she make other reply.

As for the nature of the parole, and how well it was kept, that is not for this story.

VII

HOW JACK LOCKETT WON HIS SPURS

*Capturing the "Tartar" off the Connecticut Shore
in 1778*

 HE chips flew merrily under Jack Lockett's axe to the tune of his whistling, for he was chopping the night's supply of firewood, and the dark was shutting down apace on the cold January day. He had already made the horse and the cows snug in the barn, and his young appetite was sharp set for the supper which would be ready with the finish of his chores. He looked out on the dreary waters of the bay with the gleam of a dull twilight on them, and saw shining through the dusk a white sail skimming shoreward. "Some belated fisherman. Br-r-r, how cold it must be out there!" Jack said to himself,

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as he breathed on his frosted fingers and smote the wood with still harder strokes.

This stalwart lad of fourteen, with his fearless blue eyes and tanned face, looked more than his years, for he lived in parlous times, which ripened men early. His father, Colonel Lockett, of the Connecticut line, was away with the army in winter-quarters at Valley Forge, and his young son had to shoulder a heavy burden. He could not yet carry a firelock in battle, perhaps, but he could toil patiently for his mother and sisters, with many a sigh that there was no beard to his chin, while his brave father faced cold and hunger in camp or the lead and steel of the redcoats in the field. When he had lugged in the last armful of fagots and sat down at the smoking supper-table, the common thought found vent on his lips.

"I feel as if I couldn't eat a thing, hungry as I am, mother, when I remember dear old daddy at Valley Forge. They say that General Washington himself has scant rations, and men die every day from hunger. What 'll be the end of it all?"

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"Perhaps the stories belie the truth" (there hadn't been a word from the absent soldier for months), said the mother, trying to keep back the tears. "But look—look, Jack, at the window!" with almost a shriek. "That face! What is it?"

The cold had begun to coat the glass with a crystal veil. Somebody stood out there, and by melting the frost with the breath, now looked in on them with shadowy features and gleaming eyes. Jack stared with open mouth at the apparition. Then, with a wild whoop, and a spring which almost upset the table, he yelled, "Why, don't you see it's daddy come home?" and executed a war-dance of joy to the door.

Colonel Lockett was almost eaten up by his wife and children before he was permitted to retaliate on the savory dishes of the supper-table. He had been all day in an open boat on the water (the unsuspecting Jack had had a glimpse of him), and without food since daybreak.

"'Twas unsafe to cross the enemy's lines by land," he said, with a sigh of delicious

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contentment, sitting before the great, blazing, crackling hearth and looking into the loving faces of his young people and their mother. "To get through even as far as Sandy Hook was a narrow shave of capture. So, then, 'twas off uniform and on fisherman's suit, lent me by a kind heart, who also gave me a cast in his dory to the Great South Bay. Thence across Long Island to Glen Cove, and 'twas easy there to find a sail-boat to fetch me home over the Sound."

"And you didn't know of the British ship *Tartar* lying off the place here?" said Jack, with wonder and alarm.

"Not till too late. And having thus ventured, 'twould have been a coward's job to have gone back," answered the father, with a smile.

"But," said Mrs. Lockett, with a face as white as the snow without, "you're not in uniform. Should you be taken?" Even the youngest of the children knew what that meant, and they shuddered with the vision of him they loved standing with the fatal noose about his neck amid the jeers of a brutal soldiery.

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"Tut, tut, good wife," quoth the Colonel, gayly. "These be but soldiers' risks, and; trust me, the hemp you fear is not yet spun. And now away with grewsome thoughts. Tell me how you make matters here, for I've long been without news."

"Lackaday," said the wife, "'tis but a dull story. All the goodmen away, and none but lads and grandfathers to till the fields and care for the women. The Cowboys and the Skinners* scour the country like wolves. What the one leaves the other takes. We've suffered with our neighbors, but bear it lightly, dear heart, for thought of you all in the thick of the trouble."

"No tongue can speak what the poor fellows endure," said the soldier. "Uniforms in rags, without blankets to keep 'em warm at night, scarcely one good meal a day,

* During the Revolution there were gangs of ruffians, little less than bandits, who spread terror through the region adjacent the field occupied by the armies. Within a radius of twenty miles from New York, then in possession of the British, these bands were dubbed Cowboys and Skinners, the first nominally Tories, the others Patriots—both outcasts, whose only thought was plunder.

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shoeless feet that drip blood a-walking post in the snow. His Excellency had me to dinner the night before I left camp. One tough smoked goose for eight, but 'twas washed down with the General's choice Madeira. Tears came to his brave, patient eyes as he talked. 'Oh, for some brave, heroic deed,' he said, 'some dashing stroke, something to shoot a thrill of cheer through these downcast spirits! 'Twould be better, methinks, than the coming of a great supply train.' Even *his* iron soul sometimes falters. And now, Jack, about the *Tartar*. Does she trouble the country overmuch? I made a long beat to 'scape the lookout."

The boy clinched his teeth. "'Tis a brazen jackanapes, that Captain Askew. His boat parties do as much mischief as the Cowboys. There's scarcely a ham left in the place from the Christmas killing. Only two days since I met him swaggering on the beach, and he threatened to impress me on the *Tartar* for a powder-monkey. There was a scowl on his red face. 'Look ye, you rebel spawn, they say your father calls himself a

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colonel under Mr. Washington. Some day I shall come and take ye aboard to serve his Majesty, and introduce ye to his Majesty's faithful servant, the cat.'" The boy stopped and then started as if something burned him. "Oh, daddy, think of what General Washington said! If we could only—"

The same thought leaped like an electric spark between them—brave father and gallant boy. No need of words. Eye flashed it to eye. To capture and destroy the *Tartar*—a small matter indeed in the sum of the struggle, but might it not be like a spark of flame in dead dry wood to kindle fire and hope?

Colonel Lockett lay quietly at home during a whole week. Scarcely a soul seemed to know of his coming. But Jack took long rides, to his mother's wonderment, by night and by day through the country. The secret talks between Jack and his father; the look of excitement that kept his face aglow—some mystery alarmed her. At last she learned with terror of the enterprise afloat to cut out the British ship, and she made the boy's

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father promise that Jack should not go with the boats.

"No! no!" he said to the agonized lad. "You are my faithful lieutenant ashore, but must stay behind from the attack. Should aught happen to you, what will come to your mother and sisters when I am gone?"

Poor Jack bit his lip in silence. 'Twas a hard strain on filial obedience, for his hot young blood had tingled with the thought of what was to come.

A large barn stood in a lonely place about three miles from the Lockett house. One night a passer-by would have fancied something strange going on there. Many a horse was hitched to the trees of the adjacent wood, lantern-lights twinkled through the crevices, and every few minutes little groups came up and slipped through the barn-door. When all had gathered, the tall form of Colonel Lockett arose in their midst, and the roll was called to see that none was there except those apprised.

"You know what you've come for, friends and neighbors," said he. "We are about to

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strike a gallant blow for the good cause. It's not too late for those to withdraw who fancy the hazard overbold. For half-armed countrymen to storm a royal ship seems heavy odds of failure. But courage on one side and panic on the other will right the scales. And there are no better weapons than yours for a hand-to-hand fight. A pitchfork with a short handle, a scythe set in a stick, make the best of boarding-pikes. We need no firelocks. The ship must be taken by surprise and carried with a rush. The decks once swept and the hatches battened down, and she is ours. There is no moon, and the air and sky betoken a great snow-storm brewing. When that comes, whether to-morrow night or later, we attack." And so he gave them stirring words, saying that this feat would ring like the peal of a trumpet.

He proceeded to tell off the boat-crews, appoint the officers of each division, and give careful instructions.

"And now, old men and beardless boys, it rests with you to do what will set men's

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hearts thumping when 'tis known," was his parting, as each went his way fired with the thought of a gallant deed to be done.

The next night proved propitious. It was a thick, windless snow-storm, and the white smudge of flakes blinded eyesight better than the blackest black. An hour after midnight the four whale-boats which floated the expedition pushed off from the little cove. Jack had gone to the landing to say good-bye to his father, his head buzzing with things that didn't get to his tongue, and, curiously enough, he had slipped a heavy hatchet under his coat.

"It's for you to be hero at home just now," was the Colonel's last word. "Two years hence, if the struggle still goes on, my brave lad shall have a chance to strike a blow."

Jack, whose conscience smote him sorely, mumbled something as his father's boat moved out into the storm with muffled oars. But as the last boat slid into deep water the boy gave a spring and landed in the stern, light as a feather. "Sh! Not a word," said he, in a low voice. "I'm going if I have to swim."

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The officer of the boat, an old farmer, who had seen service in the French and Indian wars, scratched his gray poll in grave doubt. "Waal, I like yer grit fust rate, and ye come by it naturally. I guess I'll hev to see ye through, ef it is agin the Kurnel's orders. But ye ha'n't no we'p'n?" Jack pulled out his hatchet, and the old chap laughed again to himself. "Blessed ef breed don't tell ary time, when it's a bull-pup."

The *Tartar* lay at anchor two miles off the point, and on such a blind night, with its smother of snow, it was easy to miss the goal. Orders had been strict that the boats should keep bunched together almost within oar's-length. True, the men of the crews knew their waters so well that they might have bragged they could smell their way to the frigate over that smooth, black pitch, like hounds on the scent. But cocksureness was tricky on such a night. They pulled with slow strokes, straining to catch a sound or a glimpse. It had begun to get intensely cold, and the spit of the snow stung their faces and stiffened their fingers. Jack's young blood

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was proof against rigor of frost, for his ears sang with a roaring music, as if a pair of sea-shells had been clapped against the sides of his skull. His veins beat like hammer-strokes. He thought he felt a new sensation. "Can it be I'm afraid?" he repeated to himself.

No, Jack, fear never comes that way. Fear strikes the coward to a lump of jelly. What you feel now quivering to your fingertips is the thing which gives fire and mettle to every gallant heart and nerves the muscles to greater strength. No fighter worth his salt ever failed of this galloping music in his veins on the eve of action. Whisper to that graybeard by your side whether he doesn't feel the same leap of pulse, though his sinews have got stiff at the plough-tail and his blood sluggish with years since he smelled powder. And don't you remember, too, Jack, that you felt a little of the same sort of thing that time you "pitched in" and "licked" the hulking bully nearly twice your size, for insulting the "school-marm," till he bellowed like a calf?

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It seemed that more than an hour must have passed. Could they have missed the ship? was the thought of all. This meant failure. There was not the faintest ripple in the dead silence. But hark! there suddenly boomed on the night the sweet, muffled notes of a ship's bell, and with it there was a dim flicker to starboard, as of a light shining through a port-hole. Luck was with them, after all, and now the time was close at hand. A denser black loomed against the darkness, vaguely outlining the ship's hull, and the head boat grated on the long hawser holding the after anchor, thrown out to take up the swing of the ebb-tide. And hark again! Through the cabin windows, suddenly thrown open as if for a breath of fresh air, floated the sounds of laughter and singing, the chorus of a bacchanalian catch. Captain Askew and his subs, late as it was, were still making merry with song.

"Gad! 'tis dark as Erebus," said one of the voices at the grating. "What a night for a cutting-out party!"

A dozen strokes parted the boats to port

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and starboard, and they dashed for the ship's sides. Up they swarmed into the chains and clambered aboard, though not with the sailor's light foot. The watch on deck were asleep or dozing in sheltered nooks. They sprang to arms with a shout, but were speedily killed or disabled. A dozen lanterns flashed over the decks as the crew tumbled up out of the forecastle hatch, for all others had been spiked down. Half naked, and scarcely awake, they yet fought doggedly. The Captain and his officers trooped out of the cabin, flustered with wine, but loaded to the muzzle with pluck, and fell to with sword and pistol. Colonel Lockett had detailed a dozen picked men with bags of slugs and powder-canisters to make ready and wheel around fore and aft a couple of the deck-carronades. The assailants were in the waist of the ship, and the fury of the assault had begun to drive men-of-war's men under hatch, for the ship was undermanned and the crew somewhat outnumbered. Scythe and pitchfork did their work well. It was at this moment that one of the carronades sent its rain of buck-



JACK SAVES HIS FATHER'S LIFE

HOW JACK LOCKETT WON HIS SPURS

shot into the thick of the British sailors and completed the rout.

Instantly they had boarded, Jack, swinging his hatchet, looked about for his father, and pressed forward to his side, though the Colonel did not see him, thinking him at home watching with his mother. When Captain Askew made the dash from the cabin the two leaders instinctively knew each other and crossed blades, for Colonel Lockett had snatched a cutlass from a fallen sailor. They cut and parried fiercely on the half-lit deck for a few moments, when the Colonel's foot slipped on the wet wood. That second would have been his last, but Jack's uplifted hatchet fell like lightning on Captain Askew's shoulder, and smote him flat to the deck. With this the battle was ended.

Colonel Lockett looked on the lad's panting, flushed face with amazement. "Why, Jack, I ordered you not to come. What does this mean? You deserve a good horsewhip—Why, Jack, Jack, you disobedient young villain, you've saved your father's life!" and with tears rolling down his face he clasped

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the brave lad in his arms. The *Tartar* was taken up to New Haven, and the Captain, who was only severely wounded, with the other prisoners, delivered over to the Continental officer in charge of the post.

When Colonel Lockett returned to Valley Forge, which he did without delay, Washington thanked him in general orders for his brave feat. Jack got his heart's wish, and during the last year of the war actually served on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, young as he was.

VIII

THE TAKING OF FORT MOTTE

When Marion's Men Were Fighting in the Carolinas in 1781

T was generally agreed among the neighbors when the Widow Motte's house was finished that there was not a handsomer mansion anywhere in the two Carolinas. Standing on the top of a long hill, it overlooked the country for miles around. Its commanding situation made it a prominent feature in the landscape, and its white and shining walls were visible for a long distance. The house was finished in the winter of 1780, and the widow moved in as soon as it was ready for her. She had spent much time in the selection of her carpets and furniture, and the prospect of settling and arranging all her belongings in

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her new home promised her congenial occupation for a long time to come. It was a beautiful country that she viewed from her windows—a land of pleasant farms and great forests, with a broad river winding in and out among the hills not far away.

If it had not been for the war, which was waged with unusual bitterness in the Carolinas, the widow would have been a happy woman. She was an earnest patriot, and as she had neither sons nor brothers to take up arms, she was often heard to express her regret that she was a woman, and therefore unable to strike a blow in behalf of the cause of liberty. All she could do was to pray and hope, and many times a day, as she moved about her new and splendid house, did she send up a silent prayer for those devoted souls who were bravely giving up their lives.

But before she had fairly become accustomed to her new surroundings, a force of British soldiers unceremoniously bundled the Widow Motte out of her mansion and proceeded to turn the place into a fort. A

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deep trench was dug around the house, and along its inner edge a high, strong parapet was constructed. The widow took up her abode in a vacant farm-house on another hill not far away, and every day she watched with rising anger the transformation of her property from a fine, hospitable Southern home into a grim and menacing military fortress. The widow thought of her new and costly carpets stained and muddied by the tramping soldiers; and she pictured to herself the havoc wrought among her delicate lace curtains by vile tobacco-smoke, and the ugly gashes which she had no doubt were already torn in the silken coverings of her chairs and sofas by the spurs of careless officers. And she thought of her beds, too, with their immaculate linen, nightly occupied by rough soldiers, who, she was sure, never took off their boots upon any occasion whatever. The thought of her precious china, much of which her mother had brought from Boston, set out every day before those men—the greater part of it was probably broken already—was a bitter

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trial. The parapet had been built so close to the walls of the house that all the exercises and drills of the soldiers took place on the lawn in front, and as the widow watched them day by day she wished more than ever that she had been born a man.

Fort Motte soon came to be one of the most important in the chain of posts that Cornwallis and Lord Rawdon had stretched across South Carolina. It was made the principal depot of the convoys from Charleston to Camden, as well as of those destined for Forts Granby and Ninety-Six. The place was strongly garrisoned by a force of one hundred and fifty men, under Captain McPherson, who was himself a brave and gallant officer.

In the spring of 1781 Lord Rawdon's army was in Camden, where it had been engaged upon one or two occasions by General Greene, without decisive results. A number of victories gained by the Continentals in various parts of the State determined Greene to make an effort to break down the enemy's chain of posts—the accom-

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plishment of this would mean the recovery of the whole State within thirty miles of the sea—and General Francis Marion and his little band of noble followers, reinforced by Colonel Lee and a detachment of Continentals, proceeded against Fort Watson about the middle of April, and after a siege of a week the post was captured by a most ingenious and clever device. Then, after one of his characteristic raids through the country, where he spread terror and destruction everywhere, Marion appeared before Fort Motte. A few hours previous to his arrival a force of dragoons from Charleston had arrived at the fort and strengthened its already sufficient garrison; but as soon as Marion's band, together with Lee and his Continentals, appeared, Captain McPherson despatched a messenger to Lord Rawdon at Camden for more help.

Lee took up his quarters on the hill where the Widow Motte now resided, while Marion went into camp on the eastern slope of the same ridge upon which stood the fort. A battery was immediately constructed, and

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on it was mounted an old six-pounder that Greene had given to Marion, and that had been dragged for weeks along dusty roads, through almost impenetrable swamps and heavy forests, until Marion often wished he had never seen it. But its time of usefulness had come at last. Mounted on the spot Marion had selected, it was in an excellent position to rake the northern face of the enemy's parapet. McPherson had a cannon in the fort, but it had never been mounted, and, as his messenger speedily returned from Camden with the news that Lord Rawdon with his whole army had already started to his relief, McPherson did not consider it worth while to prepare the piece for use.

Mrs. Motte's hospitality to the Americans was unbounded. She was constant in her efforts to provide them with comforts, many of which Marion and his men had long been without. For months at a time their only food had been potatoes, and sometimes a little lean beef or hominy; but the cause of their greatest suffering had been the continued lack of salt.

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Marion's earthworks were rapidly constructed, and on the 20th of May he made a formal demand for the surrender of the fort. To this McPherson replied, with a slightly sarcastic message, to the effect that instead of surrendering he should prefer to try the strength and patience of the besiegers. Almost at the same moment that McPherson's answer was received, a messenger came to Marion from Greene with the news that he had had another encounter with Rawdon, which had resulted in the latter's abandoning Camden, after having set fire to the place, and marching with all his force to relieve McPherson. Greene's message ended with an earnest appeal to Marion to take the fort immediately. On the next night Rawdon's army reached the country opposite Fort Motte, and the light of his camp-fires on the hills far away across the river could be plainly seen by the people in the fort, as well as by Marion and his men outside.

The following morning was clear and hot. As soon as he had finished his breakfast, which, thanks to the bounty of the Widow

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Motte, was a much more sumptuous meal than he usually enjoyed, Marion, accompanied by two or three of his men, paid a visit to Lee's camp. Together the two officers paced up and down in the shade of the widow's farm-house, the General occasionally eying the white fort opposite, as it lay gleaming in the brilliant sunlight.

"Whatever is to be done must be done quickly," said, Colonel Lee, respectfully. "There is not time to subdue the place with our single cannon."

"That is true," replied the General. "Some more speedy method must be adopted. The house occupies practically all the space within the parapet; we must burn the rascals out."

"It seems a poor return to Mrs. Motte for her hospitality," remarked Lee.

"It does, indeed," returned the General; "but there is no alternative." And stepping to the window, within which the widow sat gazing across at her handsome house, he explained the situation in a few words. The good lady paled, and remained silent for several minutes.

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"I do not believe I ever could live in the house again," she said at length. Then, after another pause, she continued, earnestly: "There is no doubt as to my duty in the matter. I can truly say that I am glad to sacrifice my house for my country. And now," she added, brightly, as she rose from her chair, "I think I have something here that you will find useful." She went to a cupboard in the corner of the room and took out a long bundle, and, returning to the window, quickly unwrapped it, disclosing a large bow and a number of arrows. These she handed to the General, with a smile. "The bow has never been used, so far as I know; and it is so heavy that I doubt if you have a man in your company strong enough to bend it."

The General chuckled. "Wait a moment," said he, "and I will show you," and, turning, he called out, "Nathan Savage!" to one of his men who was sitting under a tree near the house, cleaning an old shot-gun. The man got on his feet, and with an awkward salute came forward. He was about

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twenty-one years old, and big and brawny. Although, like all of Marion's men, he was thin from overwork and insufficient food, it was easy to see that he was a man of great and unusual strength. He was clad in a short scarlet jacket, much too small for him, homespun trousers, and a 'coon-skin cap. His feet were encased in a pair of tattered moccasins.

"Nathan," said General Marion, who had known him ever since he was a baby, "I think you know how to use a bow and arrow?"

"I reckon I do, sir," grinned the young fellow.

"You know the old Indian trick," Marion continued. "Do you think you could send a few firebrands from our camp into yonder roof? I want to warm those people up a little."

Nathan looked back at their camp and then across to the fort. "'Twould take a mighty good bow to do it. I reckon that painted thing you've got in your hand wouldn't be of much account."

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At this the widow, who had now come out of the house and joined them, laughed heartily. "Let him try it, General Marion," she said; "I'll wager he cannot even bend it."

Nathan took the bow and examined it curiously. He was familiar with the bows of the Indians, and he himself had made many during his boyhood; but this was unlike any he had ever seen before. It was very long, and had a sharp bend in the middle, and the ends of it were turned up. It was made of horn and wood cunningly joined together, and was covered with strange carved decorations, stained in different colors. The arrows were long and very slender, and tipped with straight steel heads eight or nine inches long and pointed.

"It was brought from India," said the Widow Motte, "by my husband's brother, who was captain of a ship, and my husband always valued it very highly as a curiosity. When they turned me out over there," shaking her fist in the direction of the fort, "I brought it along with me, little thinking I should ever have any use for it. But come,"

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she went on, speaking to Nathan, "let us see what you can do with it," and she laughed again. She was in good humor now, and continued chatting with the General as if the matter of the deliberate burning of her fine house was of very little consequence.

The young man tightened the string of the bow, tested it with his thumb, and, selecting one of the arrows, sent it straight up into the air, far out of sight. When, some seconds later, it returned and buried itself about two-thirds of its length into the ground almost at his feet, he grinned once more and said:

"General, that *is* a bow, sure enough. I reckon I can punch a few arrows into that roof all right."

Marion returned to his camp. Detachments were posted opposite each entrance to the fort, and by noon all was ready. The day was very hot. A little breeze that had stirred the leaves in the early morning died down completely as the hours wore on. The birds were silent, and the only sounds above the chirping of the myriads of insects were

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the noises of the men and horses in the camps. High over all shone the fierce Southern sun. There had been no rain for weeks, and everything was in an excellent condition for their plan.

"Once on fire, nothing can save the house," remarked Colonel Lee. "'Twill burn like tinder."

Balls of resin and brimstone were attached to the arrows and set on fire. Then, one after another, three separate shafts were sent against the glittering roof from that wonderful bow. A few moments later and three little spirals of blue smoke mounted slowly into the air. Presently they grew thicker and darker, and with his glass Marion could see little tongues of flame licking up the edges of the shingles. Now a man appeared upon the roof with a bucket in his hand. He had scarcely taken two steps when the sharp crack of a rifle rang out, and with a howl of pain he dropped the bucket and plunged headlong through the skylight. By this time the roof was well on fire, and a great column of smoke rose straight into

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the air and then drifted slowly off to the eastward, curling down and covering one end of the parapet.

McPherson hastily organized a large party, and hurried them to the roof to fight the fire. But Marion was prepared for this, and he sent shot after shot into them from his old six-pounder, while such of his men as were armed with rifles kept steadily at work, and in a few minutes they drove the soldiers down. The fire began to rage more furiously. The watchful besiegers, always alert, guarded every passage, and twenty minutes later, no longer hopeful of Rawdon, McPherson hung out a white flag imploring mercy. Marion, always humane, readily granted this, although Lee, far less tender in his feelings, strongly urged a bloodier course. But Marion was firm, the gates were opened, and the garrison swarmed out to find themselves prisoners, just as the roof of the great house fell in with a mighty crash, sending a thick column of sparks and roaring flames high into the air.

During the siege Marion lost only two men.



HE SENT SHOT AFTER SHOT INTO THEM FROM HIS OLD SIX-POUNDER

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The British loss is not stated, but it must have been considerable. The prisoners were immediately paroled; but, before they left, Mrs. Motte gave a splendid dinner at her farm-house, to which both the English and American officers were invited. In the course of this dinner, which history tells us was a most successful affair, a servant entered the room, and, stepping up behind General Marion's chair, whispered to him that some of Colonel Lee's men were at that very moment engaged in hanging certain of the Tory prisoners. Marion immediately left the room, and, seizing his sword, hurried with all speed to Colonel Lee's camp, in time to save one poor wretch, about whose neck a rope had already been placed. Two were dead already. With drawn sword, and almost choking with indignation, Marion threatened to kill the first man that made any further attempt to harm the prisoners. Overawed and ashamed, the men slunk away, and the Tories were not molested again.

As for young Nathan Savage, he was the

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hero of the hour. His comrades praised him in their rough, hearty way, General Marion assured him that he was in a fair way for promotion, and Mrs. Motte had so great an admiration of his strength and skill that she made him a present of the bow and remaining arrows to keep as a souvenir of the day.

IX

AFTER ARNOLD

Trying to Trap a Traitor in 1781

I

 MUST needs tell now, having the time and being in hospital with my wounded left arm, of what befell me on the memorable occasion when I last saw that much despised traitor General Arnold; and if, in the telling, my words are blunt and my lines unpolished, I shall make no excuse except to remind you that my hand is much accustomed to the sword and but little to the pen.

Having delivered his Excellency's despatches to my lord the Marquis de Lafayette, who, lying with his army on the north bank of the James, was closely watch-

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ing Lord Cornwallis, I was eager for the return to our main army, or perchance to any place where I might no longer suffer with the dulness of camp-life. So I waited with no small impatience for the return despatches which the Marquis, with mayhap good reason, delayed from day to day.

De Courcey, of the staff, was no less eager for active service, and many were the talks we had, as hot young bloods will, of the manners in which we might improve our grades, for, captain though I was, my ambition was hot and my arm itching for work.

'Twas then with no small joy I heard an orderly summon me to Lafayette's tent, and hastened there with little decorum and much eagerness.

I think me I should not at first sight have called the Frenchman aught but a gay young lieutenant, though well, when I knew him, his general's uniform became him, for the head above it and the heart within were a general's without mistake, though the hair on his lip would have shamed a boy of

AFTER ARNOLD

twenty, and his figure made many a lass envious.

But it behooves me to tell what happened, and De Courcey, looking over my shoulder, tells me I chatter too much like a silly maid.

The Marquis was busy over some papers when I entered, as was his habit, and—much he resembled his Excellency in this—dressed most carefully.

He bade me be seated, nor hesitated in asking—what was nearest my heart—if I fain would ease the monotony of camp-life by a small adventure.

“You have the love of it, *mon Capitaine?*” he asked.

“Nay,” I protested, “no love of it—but if it must be as a duty, I have no dislike.”

“I have in mind a plan,” said he, “which needs brave men and cool; for like as not it means either success or—”

“Death?” asked I, as he hesitated.

“And success means—mayhap a colonelcy,” he added.

“Nay,” cried I, “tempt me not too much, lest I be rash.”

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"You know General Arnold?"

"Ay. The traitor!"

"The traitor—I want him."

"Ah," he cried, smiling, as he saw surprise in my eyes, "but for no evil purpose. Think not that. Merely—a hanging."

"A hanging!" said I.

"Listen," he continued. "It has come to my ears that Arnold visits, some three or four times within the week, the house of a Mr. Cortland, on the south bank of the river, some six miles from Yorktown—there, I doubt not, to hear news from the north."

"And his men?"

"Some few only. Our troops are not within twenty miles, and Arnold fears nothing."

"Your orders, then—"

"Nay, not so fast. Art under my orders or still on his Excellency's staff? I give no orders, 'tis simply—"

"Six men might be able—" said I.

"Three would be too many, I fear me," he interrupted.

"Captain de Courcey is heavy with inactivity," I suggested.

AFTER ARNOLD

“Ah, he is rash—but take him—fishing.”

De Courcey was eager, but I bethought me first of some few inquiries, being ignorant of the country, and soon by diligent questions of some negroes I arranged a plan, and, night coming most favorably dark, I haled De Courcey from his cot, and within the hour we were pulling down the James, I at the oars and De Courcey chattering—like a Frenchman.

’Twas dull enough for us, nor shall I weary you with it; suffice to say at the first touch of dawn we drew to shore under sheltering bushes, and, being well concealed, passed the day without incident, but most drearily, doing naught but sleeping and making sad havoc with that which my good man Toby had stored in the boat.

We were, I judged, some two miles from Cortland’s place, and ’twas my intention to reach it at night, and then all depended upon our good fortune or ill, for my plan carried no further than the house; and what we should find there must create a plan of itself.

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The night again coming on was brought with a clear moon, at which De Courcey hummed a gay tune and was for going on at once, for, said he:

“We can see the better, and moonlight looks most pretty upon a scarlet coat.”

I doubt me not he would have liked the sunshine more, and gone gayly on, carrying a flag—two against an army. Rash was he, indeed, but still a brave man, marred by his Frenchman’s nervousness and impatience, which mayhap he will not overcome till he is gray and— But again am I rambling.

Moon or no moon, though, we must needs go on, for redcoats were plenty thereabouts, and ’twas a Sunday, on which day I had learned General Arnold most frequently visited the house. So, with eyes alert and ears strained, we drifted close in the shadows, until, in good time, the shine of lights across the water told us we were close to our hunting-ground, and perchance our quarry.

Thereupon we made the shore, and with much care drew into the trees and quietly

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up to the borders of the large grounds surrounding the house, and then, in the shadow of the shrubbery, close to the windows and within sound of voices, and there we paused where 'twas darkest. In the front of the house two lights shone from separate rooms, and at the back, where were, I judged, the kitchens, there were more lights. From there it was the voices came.

De Courcey, being lightest of foot, stole near, and soon came back with eyes shining and eager voice.

"Eight troopers and a sergeant," said he, "and rough fellows, such as your traitor General is honored in commanding."

"Our traitor General!" exclaimed I, hotly.

"Ay," said he, "and is he not?"

"A vile scoundrel," whispered I, passionately.

He shrugged his shoulders. "An American still," said he.

"We can discuss that later," said I, with an effort to control myself.

"La, la!" cried he; "you are angry. Still, he is no Frenchman, nor Englishman."

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"Fool," whispered I, "be silent."

"Fool!" exclaimed he. "Fool! I am a fool? A fool, you say? Listen, *mon Capitaine*. I have one plan. Two of us, you and I, cannot take Arnold. Let us then withdraw—retreat—go back. Fool you call me. Then can you call me fool again. And I—well, we shall see. La, la! we cannot fight the General Arnold here. We can fight ourselves. What! Will you call me fool again? Are you afraid?"

I struck him across the face. Fool was I then to so lose my temper, but my blood was hot.

"Ah!" he cried, with shrill voice. "Ah! It is done. You shall—"

A man rushed out of the house. I could see his uniform glisten in the moonlight. He peered about him intently. Then a thick voice hailed him from the doorway.

"What's the fright, sergeant?"

"Somebody was calling," answered the man.

"The rebels, maybe," cried a woman; "run into Yorktown, sergeant, and rouse the army."

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A burst of loud laughter followed this, and the men within shouted boisterously at the figure in the moonlight, who roared back, with an oath, for them to keep silence.

Then a window above was flying open, and the sound of sharp command instantly restored quiet.

I started violently at the sound, for the voice rang familiarly on my ears.

"Nothing, sir," answered the sergeant, saluting.

"Then let us have no more noise."

Again that sharp voice ran through me like a shiver. It was General Arnold.

The sergeant shuffled back to his comrades, while I stared at the open window with all my eyes.

"Will you fight?" hissed De Courcey at my elbow.

"Fight!" I exclaimed—"man, 'tis General Arnold."

"La, la!" said he; "he will not run away. 'Twill not take us a year."

"Art mad?" cried I.

"Nay, gay," he exclaimed. "See, I smile.

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I bow. I am most courteous. I say—what you call it—will you do me the honor?"

"Now you are doubly a fool," said I. "We may not fight now. To-morrow, any time, but now Arnold is there, and—"

"Now, now, I say."

I could have struck him down, but the sound of Arnold's voice had cooled my blood.

"Go back to the boat and wait," said I, and left him, making my way carefully to the front of the house. Nor did he follow. The broad piazza cast a deep shadow, and in this I moved cautiously until I reached the steps. There was a door open before me, and a light in the hall. Arnold was in a room on the second floor—perhaps above, perhaps not. Should I risk it, I asked myself, and ascend? Rash though it seemed, my only plan was to surprise him and then—well, chance must guide me. Long I debated in mind, though I doubt not the seconds were few, until, taking my luck by the throat, I slipped in the doorway, and, hearing no sound, stole quickly up the stairs,

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much disturbed by the creak of my boots and by the luckless touch of my sabre against a step. Still, with my heart in my mouth and my hands a-tremble with eagerness, and somewhat, I fear, with lack of nerve, I reached the head of the stairs and stood listening. There was no sound. I was in a wide hallway, and far at the end a gleam of light shone through a door not fully closed. There mayhap was Arnold. And who else? Alone I might take him; with two or more there I could not without alarm. Then I wished me for that fool De Courcey, for two can do much where one is lost. But 'twas no time to hesitate. Any moment I might be discovered, and that meant— But I shook off the thought, and, with pistol cocked, drew slowly near the door, step by step, until close upon it. There I listened intently, and soon, as the thumping of my heart grew less heavy in my ears, I heard voices. Two there were, nor, strain my ears as I might, could I distinguish more. Oh, for De Courcey now, and a bold dash! What might we not achieve! Yet what was I to do? 'Twas no

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small task to decide, but that good-fortune, which had stood me in good stead in the thick of many a fight, was close at my elbow, and as I hesitated the door opened. I heard a cheery good-night exchanged, as, gripping my pistol tight, I drew back where the darkness was deepest, and waited.

A man appeared at the door, and, closing it behind him, came slowly down the hall. From his heavy limp I knew it was Cortland. Would he see me? I grasped my pistol barrel, for the butt would make no noise and the ball was for Arnold if it came to a fight. On he came and brushed so close by me that I felt the swing of his coat upon my hand, but he saw me not and passed on. 'Twas not until I heard his heavy tread upon the stairs that I drew me a full breath into my spent lungs and felt at ease again.

II

And now was the coast clear? Again I approached the door, but no sound except

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the busy scratching of a pen disturbed the night. Arnold was alone. The time had come, nor would my throbbing nerves brook delay. Still, so it is with me, that three several times did my hand touch the door before I mustered strength to push it open and step inside.

The General sat writing at a table with his back towards me, nor did he move as I entered, but within the beat or two of a heart, I saying nothing, he said, without lifting his pen from paper:

“Well, Cortland?”

Still, words were not on my tongue, and, waiting for an answer, he turned slowly around. What he then saw—for my pistol was pointed at his head—changed not his face suddenly nor disturbed his muscles, for the pen hung above the paper and his hand was poised to write, but slowly over his face there spread a pallor, until the flesh grew to such a whiteness as I had seen once upon the face of a frozen corpse. His eyes shone upon mine until mine burned in my head, and so we stared and stared and breathed not.

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Nor did I move until his hand fell nerveless upon the paper. Then, with an effort: "General Arnold!" said I.

He moved not, except his tongue came out and wet his lips.

"If you shout," said I, "you die. I'll kill you."

Perhaps it was my fear of alarm that told him I was alone, for he gathered himself together and sat straight within his chair. He even wheeled it a little around to view me better, and wiped his hand across his brow, brushing away much of his fright.

"Ah," said he, but his voice trembled—"ah, Lieutenant—Lieutenant—"

"Captain," said I, "since last you saw me."

A faint, sick smile flickered in the corners of his mouth.

"My eyes are dim," said he, scanning my shabby uniform.

"We have no British gold to buy dress," exclaimed I, hotly.

He winced. And then, drumming his hand nervously on the table, said, with a glance into the barrel of my pistol:

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"Your finger trembles, Captain; art sure your aim is good?"

"I shall not murder you," said I.

Again that little twinkle in his mouth, but this time I thought me he shivered and raised his chin high above his stock. Perhaps he felt the touch of the noose about his traitor's neck.

"You travel back with me to camp," said I.

Now he smiled openly, and asked, broadly: "A prisoner in bonds and chains, and my men within call?"

"Ay," said I, bravely, "were there a score—"

Loud upon the stairs I heard the tread of a heavy foot. Arnold's face flushed with a great hope, and as I saw it I backed to the door, closed it, and shot the bolt, nor did I lower the pistol, but kept it steadily at his head.

He followed my movements with a world of inquiry in his eyes.

"Who is it?" I whispered, hoarsely.

"The sergeant," said he.

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The man's step came down the hall.

"Wouldst save your life for the moment?" asked I.

He nodded.

"Then say to him what I say," I exclaimed, "and if you play false, this to your brain," and I tapped the pistol barrel.

Then came the man's knock on the door.

"General!" he called.

"Well," answered Arnold.

"Do we start at midnight?"

"Not till daybreak," I whispered.

"Not till daybreak," said Arnold.

"Yes, sir. Any orders, sir?"

As my slow wit made me hesitate, Arnold cried out:

"Guard that door, sergeant!"

I clapped my hand upon his mouth, but the words were out, and as my pistol muzzle touched his head he smiled at me devilishly.

"Yes, sir," said the sergeant, and I thought I heard a note of surprise in his voice.

"And let no one enter," whispered I.

"Let no one enter," cried Arnold, seeing

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the light in my eyes and feeling the tremble of my hand along the pistol barrel.

For a full minute we remained thus, he sitting straight in his chair and I crouching at his side, thinking much of what next to do, and knowing not.

He looked at me inquiringly. All his fear was gone from his eyes.

“And now—” said I, and hesitated.

“Now?” said he, and he raised his hand carelessly, as if to brush back the lock of hair that hung upon his forehead—“now?” and he struck my pistol with his clinched fist, sending it flying deep in a pile of cushions across the room; and before I could recover myself, for the blow spun me half around, he had jumped to his feet, and, springing past the table, seized his scabbard, that, lying across a chair, was within easy grasp. As his blade sprang free, so did mine. There we stood, a bare sword’s length apart, with points advanced, each nerve tense, each muscle drawn, and with breath heavy, for so do strong men breathe in moments of deep peril.

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A hundred thoughts flashed through my brain, and yet but two I saw clearly. If we crossed swords, Arnold would shout for the sergeant outside the door, the alarm would be given, and perchance, while the traitor yet guarded his life with his sword, the door would be broken in and I overpowered. And yet there seemed naught else to do except—ah, could I?—for, once my pistol regained, and it was back of me a tall man's length and in the cushions, I would again have him at a vantage.

Could I regain it? Back I moved an inch. Forward came Arnold. Back still farther I went, and still our sword-points touched. The traitor's lips parted in a smile of confidence. He knew what I wanted and he was waiting his chance, and once my eyes left his, or once my knee bent to the floor, or my left hand stole behind me for the pistol, full for my throat would his sword-point spring. Well I knew this and well did he, but still backward I went and still he came on, until my heel touched the cushions. Then, as he saw the doubt in my face, I

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nerved myself for his attack and kicked backward at them. The pistol fell from their soft surface to the floor, and as I heard the sound I stepped farther back and my heel touched the butt.

The smile was gone from Arnold's face, his eyes were fierce and eager, his sword-point moved nervously around mine, and mine, like steel to magnet drawn, followed it. The time had come, the attack hung upon the hair's-breadth of a second; I could see his coming lunge within his eyes, when—

“La, la! 'tis time, gentlemen—engage! engage!” said a merry voice.

Back sprang Arnold, back sprang I, and in a second had the pistol in my hand and my finger on my lips, for the voice was De Courcey's, and there he leaned above the window-ledge, at the end of the room, his eyes dancing with anticipation and his hand clinging to the sash.

Arnold looked wildly at him. 'Twas on the point of his tongue to shout. I saw, and, springing forward, I again thrust my pistol at his head, resolved this time not again to

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lose my vantage, while De Courcey sprang into the room, and, snatching Arnold's sword from his nerveless fingers, saluted gravely.

"Your prisoner?" asked he, calmly.

"Nay, ours now," said I, softly, with my finger again on my lips.

"A traitor?" asked he, smiling.

"A traitor," replied I, gravely.

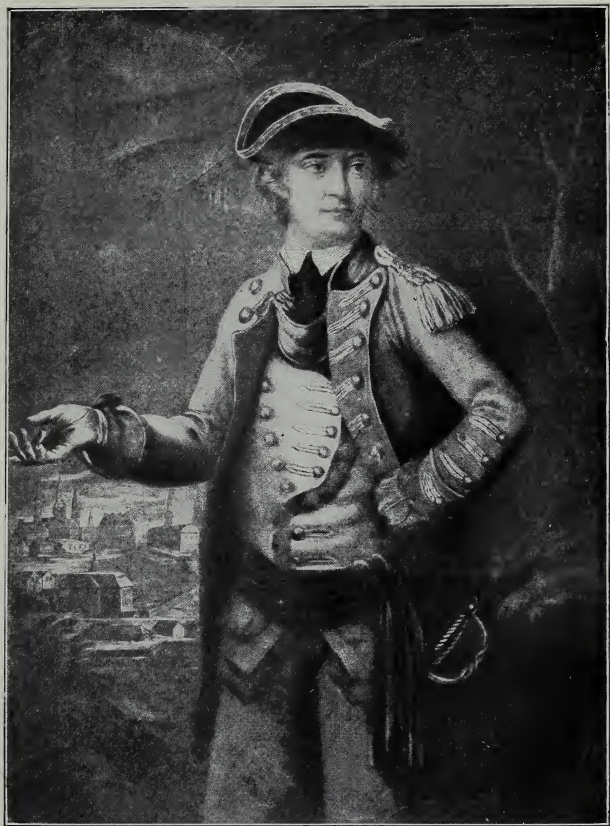
III

And now what to do? Had we possessed our senses we had bound Arnold and put a kerchief in his mouth, but, like silly fools, we sat him back in his chair, I the while keeping my pistol at his head, for all odds like a masked highwayman filching the purse of a fat traitor.

De Courcey looked at me inquiringly.

"The sergeant guards the door," said I, "but knows not we are here."

His eyes sparkled, and he moved towards the door.



B. Arnold

THE TRAITOR BENEDICT ARNOLD

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"Nay," said I, staying him, "'twould raise the alarm."

Arnold smiled at our bewilderment.

"If we die," said I, "you die first."

The traitor nodded gravely.

"Your plan?" asked De Courcey.

"An it were not for the sergeant," said I, "we three might walk quietly from the house and none would be the wiser."

De Courcey studied the door.

"How came you here?" asked I.

"Like Romeo. My ladder was the vine, and up I climbed. 'Twas strong, 'twas easy, and the height no great one."

Our eyes lighted with the same thought.

"Do you stay here," said I; "I will descend and come upon the sergeant as I came here, and then—" I touched my sabre.

"Nay," said he, "let me go. I—"

"You know not the way into the house."

"But—"

"Stay here," said I, "and, once the sergeant gone, we can carry the General like a baby and away."

Whereat again the General smiled, but,

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with the headlong confidence of youth, and full of my plan, I saw not what he might do, risking one death, if worst came, to escape that which awaited him in an American camp.

De Courcey cocked his pistol. Arnold understood.

"If an alarm is raised," said I, "shoot and kill. Then escape as best you may."

De Courcey shook my hand. He was trembling with the enjoyment of the uncertainty and the danger.

I let myself carefully down from the window, testing the heavy vine with my feet. It swayed under my weight, but held, and, inch by inch, I lowered myself until my eyes were level with the ledge. There I waited a moment, and De Courcey waved his hand. Then came a great shout of—

"Help! Help!" It rang through the night like a musket-shot. Instantly there followed the report of De Courcey's pistol, and the ball crashed through the glass above my head. He had missed. A glimpse I caught of him struggling with Arnold, locked

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in close embrace. Then the house was full of noises. The sergeant's musket beat upon the locked door. I heard above it the rush of the men's feet up the stairs, and from somewhere came a woman's shrieking voice, "Father! father!"

I strove to regain the window, but the vine swayed and bent, and, just as I heard the crash of the breaking door, one foot slipped, the other followed, and down I went, scrambling and clutching at the vine, and, reaching the ground with a great thump, lay there half stunned, hearing a jumble of voices and seeing all the stars in heaven whirling before my eyes.

For several minutes I must have lain there, before, gathering myself together and with no small ache from my bruises, I gained my feet and listened.

The light still shone from the open window, and there was the rumble of voices, but, though the night all about me was still, I could not distinguish any word.

Why had not Arnold directed a search for me? 'Twould be his first thought—but per-

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chance De Courcey had killed him. And if he had, was De Courcey alive? I had heard no more shots, but steel does the work fully as well as lead. Were Arnold alive, the men would be by this time looking for me; still there was not a sound but from the room above.

"Then," said I to myself, "the traitor is dead, and if De Courcey is not, it is for want of a rope, for naught will this rough-riding ruffraff call it but murder. I needs then must make good my escape, and quickly." But, though I took two steps towards the river, I made four backward, and drew close into the shadow of the vine.

And here, I must truthfully say, it was my obstinacy alone which kept me, with my path clear to the river and liberty; for what could I, a single man, and one full sore and bruised, gain against the sergeant and his squad? True, strategy might prevail, thought I, in my foolishness, but what poor strategy I had shown would not heavily stock a foraging-party out of a full barn-yard.

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And there I stood, not casting about, as would a sensible man, for what was best to do, but doing naught but waiting, like a sign-post on a roadway, for what next came to pass, and feeling sick at heart about poor De Courcey, dead, or close upon his death, in the room above.

The minutes grew long as I waited, but, with the passing of each one, my inclination to make for the river and get away grew less and less. In my foolhardiness I even tried the vine again, half resolved to climb to the window and still my curiosity as to what had happened by a peep within, but, torn from its hold upon the stones by my fall, it would not have held a light-footed boy.

And then, as I waited, good-fortune again smiled upon me. Two soldiers came from the door and passed me slowly.

"What think you he wanted here?" asked one.

"Mayhap to bribe the traitor back to the American lines," answered the other. "A hard task, I say, for gold is as scant with the rebels as good fighting is with us."

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"More like to kill the General," said the first; "and he nigh succeeded."

"An his skull is as tough as his hide, he'll pull through safe. But what of the Frenchman?"

"But one thing. We have plenty of rope. Hast ever seen a hanging? 'Tis pretty sport. 'Tis grand to see them kick," and the fellow laughed coarsely, and I could hear him, as they passed, telling what he had seen, with huge delight.

Then De Courcey was still alive and Arnold was wounded. Now, indeed, I could not leave the Frenchman. Oh, if Marion's troopers were but near for a rousing dash, a handful of prisoners, and a gallant march back to camp. I let my thoughts run riot in picturing it, until my senses were brought back to me with a rush by the tramp of feet, and around from the front of the house came the sergeant with a squad of soldiers, and in their midst, with his arms bound, but his head high and his easy, confident smile on his lips, was De Courcey. Back I drew in the deep shadow as they passed and disap-

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peared in the kitchen. Six I counted with the sergeant, and, with the two who first passed, there were eight. All, if De Courcey's count was right, who accompanied Arnold.

Would they hang him now or wait till morning? And how could I save him? No help was within reach except my own hands, and against eight they were powerless. Could my wit save him? I cudgelled my poor brains in vain. Naught could I invent in the least degree available.

And then, for sake, doubtless, of nothing else to do, for my nerves brooked not inactivity, I stole quietly to the kitchen window and looked within. The sergeant and his eight men were talking loudly, while De Courcey, trussed like a fowl with its wings tied, lay in a corner, with a coarse-looking woman washing the blood from a cut on his head. Naught could I do with that crowd, and I measured each of the burly troopers with my eye, all ready for a fight, doubtless, and the booty it might give them.

As I looked, four of them shouldered their

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arms and made for the door. Back I sprang and hurried along in what little shadow the moon, now shining brightly, allowed. The place where I fell was now bright in the light. Past it I ran and dodged around to the front of the house just as the soldiers came into view. Hurriedly I cast about for a hiding-place, but there the ground was clear. On the other side of the house were the flower-beds. No concealment there. The soldiers drew near. To run would be to be seen. I drew my sabre, for, if it came to it, I could make a fight. The futility of it all flashed upon me, and, desperately, I sprang upon the porch and inside the door just as the men turned the corner of the house. One took up his place in the middle of the walk, and from his post could see quite into the hall. There was I between the door and the stairway, in the shadow and safe. But for how long? Nor could I get out at the front or the back without running upon a soldier. Truly was I trapped. Still, there were the stairs. Better thought I to go up than to stand waiting to be caught, and up I went,

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with some caution, for my wits had not quite left me.

IV

Then again was I in the hall, and, wasting no time in planning more plans—for all had been failures, and lamentable ones—I stepped along and came to the room where Arnold had been. Here were many signs of the struggle: the door battered in, the table overturned, a stain of blood upon the scattered papers, a broken chair, told eloquently of the fight.

Down the hall a door opened, and, peeping from within the room, I saw a girl go out. She went away from me to the other end of the hall and called to the woman below. She it was, doubtless, who had shrieked, "Father! father!" Then it came upon me that Arnold was in the room she had left. Could I gain it? I was slipping along the hall, hugging the wall close, as the thought came, nor did I consider who else might be in the room, nor why I went there. The

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silly thoughtlessness of youth, which fortune sometimes clothes with silken wings and oft with leaden feet, alone impelled me.

In I stepped, unseen. I was again alone with Arnold. He lay upon a couch, his head swathed in bandages, and all his senses fled, and moaning and tossing. Some lint and water were near. The girl was caring for him. Barely had I time to observe these things when her light step came down the hall. I slipped behind the door, nor did she see me, but, going straight to Arnold, began bathing his head. So, with her back turned to me, I swung the door quietly to, and with a snap closed it and shot the bolt.

With a cry she was on her feet and facing me, and as we stood staring I bowed, after rather coolly surveying her, who was well worth any man's eyes, so tall and lithesome was she, and with such charm of face and darkness of eye as I had seldom seen, knowing little of those Southern beauties that De Courcey had ofttimes raved about.

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“Madam—” I began, but she cut me short with a shrill cry of—

“You shall not kill him! You shall not!” and she sprang past me to the open window. But, quick as she was, I had grasped her arm, pushed her back, and pulled down the window before her cry for help had half formed upon her lips.

Then I turned just in time to save myself, for she had snatched a rapier from the wall and was at me like a tigress. Her first fierce lunge I warded off with my right arm, and it barely scratched my neck, while with my left I threw a chair before her. Still, with this and springing far back, had I but scant time to draw my sabre and turn aside her next thrust. Then began a fight, the strangest perhaps in which man ever engaged and which I would not again undertake for all the wealth and fame which I might gain in a long life. Never was there woman so skilled with the sword, never one so fearless, never one so fierce, never one so womanly, for—but I must needs tell with my poor pen what happened:

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Twice with those first two lunges came I within an inch of my death, but as I beat back the third, my eyes cleared and my wrist turned truly. Still had I no easy time of it, for long, light rapier 'gainst heavy sabre were no small odds against me, and, guard as I would, that flickering point was ever close upon me, at my head, at my throat, and again at my heart, flitting like a fire-fly, and ever the intense, eager eye of the girl behind it, and her arm steady and wrist like lightning. Back I went, and on she came, nor for a moment stayed her first attack. Around and around the room, now checked by a chair, now by a table, each time to rally and beat back the blade, to gain the inch or two of retreat that meant life to me, till my breath was heavy and my arm dull with weariness. Never a word we spoke, for breath was scant, and when eye must match the turn of a wrist and judge the flickering point of death to a hair's-breadth, there is scant time for tongue to wag.

There was death in her eyes and on her point, and I felt it and fought against it with

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all the skill that was within me, yet had I not lived to tell this tale but for her woman's heart. For as I went back and back, I stumbled over a rug, and, true to eye and hand, her point dashed in over my guard and took me fair through my left arm. But, as I felt the touch of the steel, there was a moment when my sabre hung close to her head. A turn of the wrist and down it would come, yet my muscles hung dead within my arm, through what I know not, but in the instant her life was lost and saved, and I saw that within her eyes which told me she knew it. Still she stayed not a moment in her attack, and at me came again. And now I felt the end must soon come, for the weight of my sabre was making my arm slow, and, desperate with a last hope and with my mind upon the mate of the rapier which she had pulled from the wall, I took a turn at attacking and gained time to force her back and close upon the spot where hung the weapon. But I counted not upon her woman's wit, for, divining my purpose, she jumped far back with a great bound and,

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snatching it from its place, flung it far from her, so that it fell, ringing, in a far corner.

Then for a brief space we stood idle, and she, seeing a whiteness come upon my face, for the blood was welling fast from my arm, and my coat-sleeve hung heavy with the weight of it, hurled at me the one word, "Murderer!" and again sprang to the attack.

This time I could not choose the path of my retreat, but went backward by steps and bounds to the left and right, to escape the point that now flickered over my guard and now under, and touching me, sometimes lightly and sometimes with a taste of the point, but lacking the force which soon must come to drive it home. Then, as I felt these touches, would I right willingly have ended me the fight with my own good blade upon the pretty head, but had the life and death of his Excellency hung upon the stroke, could I not have made it before her point reached my heart.

So, fighting as only man can fight when

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death is close, strove I to keep away from the steel which every moment came nearer, until, springing back from a lunge in tierce, I stumbled and fell back over Arnold's couch and upon him, whereat her point, aimed at my breast, overreached it as I fell and ripped open my cheek like an overripe apple burst with a blow.

As the blood gushed forth with a spring, she dropped her sword and cried like one in pain, "Oh, I've killed you! I've killed you!"

Then, as the red mist of the shock and pain faded from my eyes, and I saw clear again, she was on her knees washing away the blood and binding the wound with the lint she had brought for Arnold, and soothing me with soft words like a mother crooning over a sick child.

"'Tis but a scratch," said I, sitting up on the edge of the couch.

"I nearly killed you," she half sobbed.

"Nay, 'tis naught," I said, "the deeper wound is in my arm;" whereat she tore away the sleeve, and with much skill bound the

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wound there, which luckily had cut no deep blood channels.

V

With my breath came back some of my strength and much of my wits.

"You will not kill him?" she asked, anxiously.

"Not I," said I, finding my voice; "I am no cutthroat; but can I capture him, that will I right willingly."

"But that you cannot," said she; "his men are below. An officer is but now captured—are there more about?" she asked, anxiously.

"We are but two," said I.

She breathed freely. "Then he is safe!" she exclaimed, nor could I, weak as a child, gainsay her.

She went on rapidly: "It was thought the captured officer tried to kill him, and when I saw you I thought you, too, intended to slay him, and before I knew what I was doing I had the sword. My brother taught me to

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fence; he is—he is in your army. Had I killed you, I had been the murderer, and—and I am with your cause, like brother. Father—father is a friend of General Arnold's."

She read the look in my eyes.

"He was hurt and needed nursing," explained she, "and I could not see you kill him."

"Thank you, Mistress Ann," said Arnold's deep voice, and there he lay with his eyes wide open and smiling slightly.

At the sound I had jumped to my feet, and involuntarily I pulled my pistol from my belt and held it at his head.

"Nay, you will not shoot in cold blood, Captain," he said. "Give up your weapon quietly—you cannot escape."

"You may not prevent it," said I, but with small heart in my brave sounding words.

"Ah!" said he; "reach me the bell-rope, mistress."

I stayed her outstretched hand.

"An you do," said I to Arnold, "will I

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lay your brains upon the pillow. Ay, and more," cried I, spurred by a quickly born plan. "They are to hang De Courcey at sunrise."

"You shall join him," said Arnold.

"And do you go first to show us the way," said I, pressing the pistol muzzle against his head.

The girl started forward with half a cry.

"Nay," said, I "fear not, he is quite safe—on one condition."

"And that?" she exclaimed.

"That De Courcey and I get safe away."

Arnold gazed at me earnestly.

"This you shall do," said I, hurriedly: "Order the sergeant to bring De Courcey here, unbound, leave him here, and do you give no alarm."

"An I do not?" said Arnold.

"Then," said I, "murder or no murder, this ball goes through your head, and I take my chances."

He hesitated, and I think he weighed fully all his hopes of living and of capturing me, for no answer made he for some moments.

AFTER ARNOLD

The girl looked at me anxiously. I smiled to reassure her, and saw that within her eyes which the next minute her lips spoke:

"Please," said she—"please, General."

A moment more he hesitated, then—

"Pull the bell-rope," said he.

A brief space the girl's hand wavered, and then she rang.

I clipped behind a curtain between the couch and the wall. By a turn of his eyes Arnold could see the mouth of my pistol.

Heavy steps came along the hall.

"'Tis Dinah," said the girl.

"Tell her to send the sergeant here," said Arnold.

The minutes were like hours before the rough soldier appeared.

"Where is the prisoner?" asked Arnold.

"In the kitchen, sir, bound."

"Bring him here, alone. Keep his arms tied."

"Yes, sir. Your head, is it better?" The sergeant's eyes were on some clothes stained with my blood.

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"Bring the prisoner here!" cried Arnold, with much asperity.

Again the minutes dragged. I saw the girl grow red and white by turns.

"Keep a brave heart, a bargain's a bargain," said I.

Then came De Courcey, his head bandaged, his arms fast behind him, but blithe and gay as ever.

"Cut the rope," said Arnold, "and leave him here."

"General—" the sergeant protested.

"Leave him here," said Arnold, and the sergeant left the room, with many a doubtful look.

De Courcey's eyes and ears were alert. He could not understand what it meant, but he showed no concern.

"Mademoiselle," said he, with an elaborate bow, "at your service." And his eyes were full of admiration.

"General," he continued, "you sent for me?"

Whereat I stepped from behind the curtain, to his no small surprise.

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"Ah!" he cried; "the hero steps forth, the plot deepens; play on, my Captain; pistols are the trumps—eh, General?"

"And now?" said Arnold to me, and ignoring the Frenchman.

"Now," said I, "we shall leave you."

"With regret," said De Courcey.

"Gentlemen," said Arnold, with a note in his voice which I had not heard since last I saw him in another uniform, "you are brave men."

"We are Americans," said I.

"And Frenchmen!" exclaimed De Courcey.

"Captain," said Arnold, "a glass of port will strengthen you. Mistress Ann, will you serve the Captain?"

'Twas gracefully done, and yet—but Mistress Ann came forward with the glass, and I drank.

"And you, sir—" said she to De Courcey.

"With your permission, something better," cried he, and he kissed her hand. He was ever bold.

She flushed deeply.

"We go by the back stairs," said I, "and

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make a dash for it. I—I owe you my life,” said I.

She gave me her hand.

“Take the rapier,” said I to De Courcey, whose sword was with the troopers, and then, facing Arnold, we saluted and left the room.

“How many men are in the kitchen,” asked I, as we tiptoed towards the back stairs.

“Two,” said De Courcey, “and the sergeant.”

I cocked my pistol and held it in my left hand, my sabre in my right.

Cautiously we went down, step by step, for the rush was to be from the bottom. Then, half-way down, a rousing voice halted us. It was the sergeant at the bottom.

“Ha!” he cried, “I thought you’d come! Here he is, men!”

A lantern flashed up the stairs.

“Cats and dogs!” he cried—“there are two of them,” and he sprang, sabre in hand, at us, the two close upon his heels. So sudden was his onslaught that his first stroke

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knocked my pistol from my hand, nor had I time to swing my sabre. But De Courcey, at my side, shot out the rapier and pinked the sergeant fairly in the shoulder. Back he fell, full upon the men at his heels, and down rolled the three in a heap.

"Come back!" sounded a sweet voice in our ears, and instinctively we bounded to the top of the stairs.

Mistress Ann stood before us.

"This way!" she cried, and ran down the hall. Into a room we dashed. We heard the rush of troopers on the stairs, a door slid open noiselessly before us, and Mistress Ann's voice whispered in our ears:

"The stairs are steep. They will lead you to the garden. Haste, and God guard you!"

There was a click, and the noises were suddenly shut out. The air was heavy and musty, and the wall we touched was cold and rough.

"'Tis a secret passage," whispered De Courcey. "Come."

We felt our way down some narrow steps

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which seemed never-ending, and then came upon a passageway but wide enough for one man, and on and on through this till our way was blocked by high bushes. The glimmer of the moonlight was upon us. We pushed through with some difficulty, and in a moment were in the open. At our backs was the house, ahead were the trees which lined the river.

De Courcey linked his arm about my waist, for I was weak with the loss of blood and the pain in my left arm, and we hastened across the open space. As we gained the shadow of the trees we heard the voices of the troopers and saw lights flitting about the house.

De Courcey laughed and waved his hand at them.


“Au revoir!” cried he.

Ten minutes more and we were safe upon the river, and soon were deep in the shadow of the opposite shore.

X

ONE FOR AN ARMY

How Lafayette Played the War Game of 1781 against Cornwallis

HE monotony of camp-life was wearing upon me, who, fresh assigned from Washington's staff to Lafayette's army, and with all the fire of youth and the love of action, was eager to wet my new straps with blood and change them for those of a major, mayhap, in some fierce fight with the redcoats. And so I chafed and pined, and marvelled much that we did naught but drill and drill, and drill again.

Yet my lord the Marquis de Lafayette was no idle general. But now it pleased him to wait and watch, like a cat the mouse, what Cornwallis would do; for Wayne was coming

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south in haste, with his regiments of the Pennsylvania line, to strengthen our little Army of Virginia, and the English General was most intent upon preventing a junction.

To those who counted merely numbers and equipment, and judged thereby, this task was easy, for his seven thousand were hardened veterans, and our Virginia militia were— But history tells well how they fought, and I must on with the story.

Arnold had kept us busy along the James, but he was now shipped north to harry and burn along the New England coast—Cornwallis, stout Englishman that he was, albeit our enemy, having small liking for traitors.

It was early in a day when my discontent was most heavy upon me that Lafayette ordered me to his tent, methought to suggest some new form of manœuvre at drill, but there was a sparkle in his eye and a brusqueness in his manner which belied what was in my mind.

“’Tis idle in camp, eh?” asked he.

“No two answers are required for that,

ONE FOR AN ARMY

my lord," said I. "My legs are aching for the march, and my arms—"

"Art ready again for—"

"For anything," I interrupted.

He drummed on the table thoughtfully.

"'Tis not so pleasant to be a general, *mon Capitaine*, think'st thou, when one's blood's on fire for the dash and glory of adventure?"

"Rather would I make history by the bookful," said I, "than not at all, or merely a line or two."

"Ah," said he, smiling, "we cannot all be generals."

"Nor captains," said I.

"Nor," and he leaned forward and looked me in the eyes—"nor majors," he exclaimed.

"Your orders?" asked I. "I am ready."

He called an orderly.

"Ink and a pen," said he.

The man put them on the table. As he did so, my eyes fell upon him. I sprang to my feet with a great cry.

"Travers!" I exclaimed, and caught him by the shoulder.

He looked at me blankly.

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"He's a spy—a spy—a British spy!" cried I to Lafayette.

"Nay," said the General, smiling, "he is my very good orderly Simpson. Eh, Simpson?"

"Yes, sir," said the man—"of the Fairfax County militia."

"Believe him not!" I exclaimed. "He is a spy. He was a lieutenant in my regiment. He deserted months ago. He's been with the British since—paid with British gold. A spy—a dastardly spy," I said.

"Nay, not so rough," said Lafayette, for in my excitement I was shaking the man vigorously—"not so rough; uniforms are scarce."

"He'll need none when he hangs!" I exclaimed.

"He's hurting me, General," cried the man, "and—and he's an officer." There were anger and fierce hatred in his eyes, and his hands were clinched.

"Release him, Captain!" exclaimed Lafayette—"release him, I say!"

I let him go, but stood at the tent entrance.

ONE FOR AN ARMY

"Out of the way, Captain!" shouted the General. "I know my men; Simpson is a good soldier, and a true one. Let him pass."

Still I barred his way.

"But, sir—" I exclaimed.

"Obey, sir!" he cried, sternly. "His Excellency's officers are not taught disobedience, I think."

I stepped aside, and the man went out, glowering at me. I watched him as he paced up and down in front of the tent.

"I cannot be mistaken; he is—"

"Enough!" shouted Lafayette, impetuously—"enough! Am I so blind that I cannot see, and are you a soldier and an officer of sense, that you must din in my ears your foolish fancies? Sit down, sir, and listen to what I have to say."

Obediently I sat, but I could have sworn I was right, and that the man was no other than Travers. Once before had I seen him since his flight from the regiment, and had he not offered me gold and a commission to join the ranks? I was sure.

"These militia come and go," I said, hot-

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ly. "They are here and away; you cannot judge their loyalty too lightly. And the man—"

"Leave the tent, sir!" cried Lafayette, in a rage. "How dare you— But nay; my anger is quick upon my tongue. There are many resemblances. *Mon Dieu!* the man may liken another, but he is my man. And, think you, if he is a spy, I cannot deal with him? There is rope enough on our harness for a regiment of them."

"Your orders?" asked I.

"Are these: I have despatches for Wayne. You will take them to his chief of scouts, and meet him to-morrow at noon, at the ford on the Rapidan four miles south of Lester. Know you the spot?"

"I'll find it," said I.

"You will leave at midnight. Report here then for them; 'tis a good twelve hours' ride, and none too fast, and—and my lord Cornwallis is not yet between us. Learn well the road. At the ford on the Rapidan four miles south of Lester, and there if—"

ONE FOR AN ARMY

The orderly's shadow darkened the tent door.

"One of the scouts is coming into camp, sir," he said. "Shall I send for him?"

Lafayette eyed the man quizzically.

"Yes," said he.

I looked at him, and he gazed across the table at me. The man had heard his last words, and both of us knew it.

Lafayette smiled. "Still suspicious, Captain?" asked he. "Listen. The soldiers of France are taught to have but one ear, and that for orders. Go—and be a good soldier."

The afternoon I spent in seeing Bess properly fitted for the journey, my pistols fresh oiled and loaded, and my sabre brightened, and by midnight was I at Lafayette's tent.

A thin tin box contained the despatches. I thrust it in my bosom.

"Make much of the night," said the General, "and in the day pick your way carefully. Tarleton's men are thick as bees."

"And sting as surely," said I.

"Not since Guilford Court-House," said he, with a laugh. "Come; I'll walk to the

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sentries with you, and then a last word in your ears. Orderly, take the horse."

I looked at the man. 'Twas not Travers, and I gave the rein to his hand.

Lafayette and I strode forward, the horse and man close behind, and never a word passed. On we went, till the sentries brought us up.

"Mount," said Lafayette; and then, as I reached the saddle, he said, in a whisper: "The despatches direct Wayne's line of march to me. Be careful!"

Bess plunged through the darkness with her easy stride, and I drew in great breaths of the cool night air and hummed a bit of a song. It was good to be free of the camp and its smells and its bustle, and moving on to I knew not what. But, whatever came, I was ready; ay, and eager, for with Bess and my pistols— I slapped the holsters gayly, and, with a cry, pulled Bess sharply to a stand. The holsters were empty. Back went my hand to my sword. Only my scabbard was there.

What was I to do? The camp was some

ONE FOR AN ARMY

three miles back, and time was precious. I chirped to Bess and went on, full of doubts and wonder.

The dawn broke slowly, and with it a heavy mist arose and enveloped us. I had made good way during the darkness; and now, both for safety and to ease Bess, I dismounted and walked, ready instantly to pull aside into the wood, for well I knew that Tarleton's men were at any time liable to loom out of the mist. On I walked while the mist held, Bess glad of the ease, until a light, soft rain falling beat it to the ground, and, with the road clear, I mounted and cantered on. The hours passed slowly, but I knew from signs here and there that I was close upon my journey's end. Then came in sight the houses of Lester, and, keeping along the knoll that overlooks the town, and with a good two hours to make the ford, I left the road and let Bess pick her way among the trees, for there it was safest.

Thus I came upon the ford a half-hour before the time, and bided in the closeness

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of the thicket. Then, when the sun was highest, out I rode and let Bess find her way across, for I knew it not and trusted to her good sense. Half the distance she had gained, when, among the trees on the farther bank, a horseman appeared and waved his hand. Joyously I snatched the despatch-box from my breast and held it high over my head. He beckoned me on, laughing, and I, flushed with the success of the meeting, laughed too. At that he rode to the water's edge, and the laugh died soundless on my lips, for his uniform was scarlet and his carbine was aimed at my head. On Bess's quivering neck I dropped, whirled her around, and dug my spurs in her flanks. Wild with pain, she dashed back over the course she had come—dashed back, and full into the ranks of a dozen troopers waiting for me. Two seized Bess's head, my empty scabbard was dashed from my hand, and one man laid me by the collar. With a last effort of desperation, I hurled the despatch-box backward over my head, and grinned in my captors' faces as I heard its splash in the water.

ONE FOR AN ARMY

"Bind him," said a deep voice, "and one of you strip and after that box, quick!"

I turned to see him who gave the command. 'Twas Tarleton himself, and, as I looked, down the opposite bank came a troop of horse.

"A pretty trap, General," said I.

He nodded, watching anxiously the trooper diving after my box. Three times he went down, and came up puffing and empty-handed. Again he tried. There was a shout from the men. He had it.

Tarleton himself, in his eagerness, pried it open and scanned the papers. He smiled with satisfaction.

"Good news?" asked I, lightly, though my heart was heavy with despair.

"Good for you, if you are eager to see the Frenchman soon again," said he, grimly.

"And where?" queried I.

"A prisoner in a British camp, the day after Cornwallis captures Wayne at the crossing of the Rapidan, twelve miles south of here, where he is to wait for the Frenchman."

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I bit my lips to keep back the tears of despair and anger which filled my eyes.

"But"—and a great hope filled my heart—"but—" and I stopped myself from saying what was slipping from my too ready tongue.

"But what, man?" exclaimed Tarleton, hurriedly writing, and using his knee as a desk.

"There'll—there'll be a bit of a fight."

He folded the paper and thrust it into an officer's hands. "To Cornwallis, and with all haste!" he cried.

"A—a good fight," continued I, nervously.

He glanced at me keenly.

"Say, rather what is in your mind," said he—"that Wayne has not yet received these despatches, and knows not where to meet your Frenchman."

I flushed hotly.

"But I shall be generous," said Tarleton, rapidly—"ay, generous to the rebel. They are pretty reading. He shall have them, and soon. You—you are tired; your horse is weary. I have a fresh man and horse. Here, sir, make haste and away."

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I turned. Lafayette's orderly and Travers was before me. Deliberately he buttoned my despatches in his coat, his militia uniform, deliberately he sneered at me, and deliberately he struck me in the face with his open hand, and with a laugh and a shout dashed across the ford.

"The traitor!" I exclaimed.

"The coward!" cried Tarleton at my elbow, and a hoarse growl among his men echoed his words.

An hour later we joined the main body of Tarleton's force and camped. There was I placed in a tent next to Tarleton's, and with a sentry in front, and, unbound, was left to my own reflections, while the troopers lounged about, eager for the word which was to come with the return despatches from Cornwallis, and which would hurry them back to the main force, or, what was more probable, send them off on a foray after the Colonial wagon-trains.

Sore of heart and heavy of nerve, I slept, after my wearisome night ride, far into the

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evening; nor was it till an orderly brought me a hearty meal, and, with General Tarleton's compliments, a bottle of good old port, that I fully waked. Then, with new life within me, I waited, eager for the next move, and with so deep a distaste for the prospect of a prison in a British hulk on the bay that I swore within myself no chance for escape should pass me by unnoticed. Full of the desire, but as fully lacking all plan, I yet took what opportunity there offered and examined my surroundings. In front of the tent paced the sentry. Peeping under the canvas at the back, I made out in the darkness a great tree, and beyond that a fire. At one side a group of soldiers sat smoking and chatting; at the other, and but a few feet away, loomed Tarleton's tent. Between, and shielding the ground from the light of the fires, was the deep shadow of the tree. In the tent all was black and silent.

With the flash of a plan—a wild, desperate plan—in my mind, my hand sought my pocket-knife.

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"Wake me when we move," said I to the sentry.

"We don't forget prisoners," said he, with a smirk.

Then, throwing myself face downward on the side of the tent nearest Tarleton's, I waited till the man was farthest away, and, with a quick slash of my knife, ripped the canvas for a foot. The hum of the men's voices and the crackle of the fire drowned the noise of the tear. I crept through and lay in the shadow between the tents. Again I waited, and with my heart scarce beating—for who might not be in Tarleton's tent?—until the sentry was farthest away, and with another sure slash split the lower side of the tent and crawled in. I was alone, and for the moment safe.

What next? With the men about, a dash for it was almost certain death. And I had no weapon. I felt around in the darkness. Nothing. Some tin dishes, a solitary spur, a hat, a blanket, a—I felt it carefully—a cloak. These I found on the cot, and naught else. I hesitated, and the blood leaped boiling

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through my veins. 'Twas a desperate chance that danced in outline before my eyes, but—I snatched up the cloak and threw it on my shoulders; then the hat. I was about Tarleton's height and figure. Might I not pass for him? It was a chance, my only one, and I took it.

There was no time to waste. What was to be done must be done quickly, if at all. With each nerve tense, and with knees shaking with the excitement of it, I stepped boldly out of the tent. The sentry in front of mine halted and stared, so astounded he failed to salute. My heart fluttered. I had failed, then. He had discovered the deception. In half a mind to spring at him and half a mind to run, I saw the doubt in his face, and, taking boldness to my aid, coolly stared at him in return, for the light was dim and I was in the shadow. With a muttered excuse he saluted, and I passed on. Still, the chances were many against me. At any moment I might come upon Tarleton himself, and then—I chose not to dwell upon possibilities and hurried on, keeping in

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the shadow as much as I could, and, though my feet were itching to speed along, restraining them to as good an imitation of a stately, thoughtful walk as I could, with every nerve on edge.

So, with here and there soldiers rising to salute, I passed on, and came, by good chance, to the road by which we had come from the ford. To make good the pretence, I watched in silence some moments the line of sentries, and as a young officer approached to speak with me I waved him off and passed beyond the line and down the road. I was free.

As soon as there was no longer danger of being seen by the sentries, I ran until at a sharp turn of the road a black shadow loomed before me, and a sharp voice called upon me to stop. 'Twas a trooper on outpost duty standing beside his horse. So close was I upon him that I could not check my momentum had I tried, and this aided me, for with the force of my run behind me I dashed full into him, and sent him caroming to the side of the road, his carbine falling with a

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rattle. The horse, with a frightened snort, was off and away through the darkness, but at his first bound my hand was on his rein, at his second my other hand on his saddle-pommel, and at the third I flung myself into the saddle, and, crouching low on his neck, we sped into the night, followed by a vain shot.

It was needless to urge him on. He was mad with fright, and with the bit between his teeth heeded neither my hand nor my word. And so, while terror lent speed to his feet, we dashed on and away from the pursuit which faint and far away I heard starting.

Not till the ford was reached did I gain control over my beast; and then, as we rose the opposite bank and got upon the level, I settled him down to a long, easy gallop, for his strength was precious, and there was that before him worth the effort, for I was riding to save an army.

Somewhere to the north Wayne and his sturdy men of Pennsylvania were hurrying

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along, losing no hour which would bring them nearer Lafayette, for there truly did union mean strength. Together they could beat back Cornwallis; apart each might fall before his veteran army.

'Twas a chance, and yet Travers with the despatches was some ten hours ahead. Perhaps I might still be in time to turn them from the route which led to the ford of the Rapidan and to Cornwallis.

On we went, hour after hour. Up the hills I walked to rest my steed, and then down the other side we clattered. Along the levels, sometimes at a gallop, again at a canter, we went. Several times we stopped altogether, and the horse, a big-boned beast, built more for endurance than for speed, stood with legs apart and drooping head while I wiped his froth-stained muzzle and sweating flanks, and let him breathe freely for a brief space.

'Twas long past noon, when my poor beast, rising a long hill at a walk, gained the top, and as we stood resting there appeared upon the brow of a hill not half a mile away

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the figure of a horseman. He saw me as soon as I saw him, and there we stood, clearly outlined against the sky for some moments, gazing. As my eyes, heavy with dust and weary with much riding, made out the Colonial hat and uniform, I waved my hand, with a shout, and, he answering, we rode towards each other, to meet at the foot of the miniature valley. My heart beat jubilantly. Success was close at hand. The man was doubtless one of Wayne's scouts.

And so, where the road was dark with the shadow of the trees, and at the foot of the hills, we came upon each other riding slowly, I all eager for the greeting.

But as a patch of sunlight, breaking through the shadows, fell upon his face, I started in surprise.

"Travers!" I cried.

Up to that moment he had not known me, for I still wore Tarleton's hat and cloak, and what was more natural than for him to take me for one of his own men, while I was no less deceived by his Colonial uniform.

"You!" he exclaimed, nor would other



THERE APPEARED UPON THE BROW OF A HILL THE FIGURE OF A HORSEMAN

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word express the fear that lay within his heart.

"Yes, traitor, none other. Art glad?"

He said naught.

"My despatches!" I cried. "Where are they?"

His face was white and his hands trembling, but still no word came to his lips.

I snatched a pistol from the holster and levelled it at his head.

"Tell me!" I shouted, and the woods rang with the echo of my voice.

"In—in Wayne's hands," faltered he.

I could have fired and laid him dead before me, but, though my trigger finger was aching for the pull, I restrained myself.

"And Wayne?" asked I, trembling with anxiety.

"I know not. Doubtless pressing south."

"You got away?"

"As soon as I delivered the despatches I left—to—to—join Lafayette."

"Liar — traitor — despicable scoundrel!" I burst forth,

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A flush crept over the whiteness of his face as my pistol trembled in my grasp.

"Coward!" he exclaimed. "Shoot! shoot! You can kill me before I reach my pistols."

"I have no rope," said I, "else I'd hang you now."

"Fight!" said he. "Give me a chance."

"Small chance you'd give me," I cried.

"Say you are afraid," sneered he. "You are—coward!"

The word stung me like a lash.

"Take the tips of your holsters and empty your pistols on the ground," cried I. "I'll fight, but I will not trust you with those."

He did as I ordered, my pistol the mean time keeping close watch upon his traitor face.

"Now," said I, "draw and come on."

My weapon was heavy and clumsy, but the feel of the hilt and the weight of the blade put life in my arm, and the swing of it in the air was a song in my ears.

On he came with a rush, and our blades met and met again, while round and round went our horses, prancing in and out with

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the pull of the hand at each cut and parry—round and round, until we drew apart for breath and a fresh grip on our blades. No poor swordsman was he, that I soon learned; but I felt myself his master, and as we met again I pressed him hard and fast, until he gave ground and was beyond my sword's reach. Then, as he made way to come on again, he cut in feint at my head, and, drawing my parry into empty air, cut with all his strength at my poor beast's head and cleft it deep. Down went my horse on his knees, wounded to death; and as I sprang just in time from the saddle, down came his blade. I half parried, but the blow fell glancingly on my head. I spun around and fell; but though my head buzzed like a hive of bees, instinct guided my hands to the holster beneath me, and before he could recover his balance after the blow I had snatched out the pistol and aimed it at his head.

Then, strange though it may seem, there was not strength in my finger to pull the trigger, nor did my brain direct me to do

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aught but aim at him—full shakingly, mayhap, but still an aim. Big must have been the muzzle of the pistol to him, for he flung himself close upon his horse to escape the expected bullet, and, dashing his spurs into the animal, sped down the road.

On and on he went, while I, with all the world spinning round me, and Dorothy's voice afar and faint, sank to sleep upon my dead horse.

When next I gained my senses De Courcey was bending over me and I was in a tent. He saw the question in my eyes as I gazed around.

"You are safe," said he.

"And Wayne?" asked I, weakly.

"Here in camp with Lafayette, and Cornwallis in retreat on the James." Still I did not understand.

"Ah, *mon ami!*" he cried, "do you not see? You were sacrificed—one to save an army. You were to be captured; that was planned. Your despatches were written to mislead Cornwallis. They did. I, Captain

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de Courcey, your humble friend—a fool, a chatterer, a Frenchman—carried the true despatches.”

And now I saw it all. Lafayette knew Travers was a traitor; Lafayette had my weapons taken from Bess’s back, so my capture would not be jeopardized by a fight; Lafayette used me as—

“General Lafayette!” announced the orderly.

“To see you,” said De Courcey.

My cheeks flushed with gratification.

THE END



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